

AGRI-NEWS

January 3, 1994

JAN 18 1994

Putting a new pulse into food

On the surface lasagna and cookies don't appear to have much in common, but in a recent Farming for the Future research project both foods got a boost from pulses.

Kerry Engel, the Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Westlock, co-ordinated the project that looked at the market potential for peas and lentils.

"Producers all over the province are growing more pulse crops," says Engel. "This project aimed at taking the step beyond the farm gate diversification. Farmers grow peas and lentils, but what next? What value-added or processing potentials could there be for Alberta pulses?"

The project team included two other district home economists, Cindy Bishop in Barrhead and Coreene Dupilka of Athabasca, regional home economist Randi Sandhu and Wes Latimer, a Westlock area pulse grower. They surveyed dieticians in Barrhead, Athabasca and Westlock hospitals about patient meals. All were interested in high fibre menu items and cutting food costs.

The next step was Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc. Centre staff had the challenge of developing high fibre menu items using peas and lentils. Their response was three products—lasagna, oatmeal coconut cookies and a spice cake. Yellow field peas, brown lentils and red lentils were used.

These three product samples went back to the hospitals. Both dieticians and patients ate and evaluated the foods.

"The lasagna and cookie samples passed the taste test with flying colors," says Engel. "The cake received mixed reviews. It looked good and tasted terrific, but the texture wasn't what people expect in a cake."

An information display on the two pulsed-up products was put together. The display and product samples were taken to the provincial dietician association's conference. Dieticians were surveyed to see if they'd use the products and what they'd pay for them.

"This project was just a beginning, some preliminary product development and market research," says Engel. "There's still a lot of work before these products can be marketed commercially to institutions."

Besides proving pulses have a great market potential and one market is food service menus, the project had an added benefit. "The agriculture and food industry has recognized the importance of partnerships in continued industry building. This project linked producers, dieticians, the Pulse Growers Commission, the Food Processing Development Centre and district home economists," notes Engel.

For more information on the research project, contact Engel in Westlock at 349-4465.

January is Pulse Month in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. This is the second time Alberta has had a provincial pulse awareness month. The first was in January 1993 and expanded to the other Prairie provinces for 1994.

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Pulse Month also grew out of a district home economist research project. That project examined consumers' changing perceptions of pulses—dried peas, beans and lentils. The Alberta Pulse Growers Commission used the research results as a basis for the first awareness month.

For more information about Pulse Month in Alberta, contact Anne Luehr, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Taber, at 223-7907; Renald Lamoureux, Alberta Pulse Commission president, in Fort Saskatchewan at 998-5273; Craig Shaw, commission director, in Lacombe at 782-6618; or, any Alberta Agriculture district home economist.

Contact: *Kerry Engel*
349-4465

Personal finances focus of new home study course

Financial Files is a new self-study series to help farm families achieve their financial goals.

"Like all other Alberta Agriculture home studies, this course is designed so you can work through it at your own pace in your own home," says Faye Douglas Phillips, home study program co-ordinator.

The series covers goal setting, communication, examining your financial situation and looking for ways to improve and plan for your financial future. In the course, participants are encouraged to identify short-term goals that will help them develop a long-term financial plan.

"Financial Files was designed for young farm families," notes Douglas Phillips, "but, the package can be beneficial for anyone looking for an introduction to financial management."

The Financial Files series costs \$15 plus GST. To order the package, write, and also make cheques payable to, the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA), 14815-119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9. Orders from outside the province require an additional \$2 handling fee.

Application forms are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices and the home study program in Edmonton by calling 427-2402.

Financial Files was jointly developed by Alberta Agriculture's home study program and the home economics and 4-H branch with funding from the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative (FBMI) program.

Contact: *Faye Douglas Phillips* *Jean Wilson*
427-2404 427-2412

Short course offered for nursery growers

New and advanced growers are invited to take part in the first annual nursery growers short courses February 3 and 4 in Edmonton.

The short courses are a joint project of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks and the Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association (LANTA).

"In recent years, interest in nursery production has been steadily growing," says Hannah Mathers, ornamentals specialist at the Brooks research centre.

Environmental horticulture—nursery and landscape trades—is the fastest growing segment of the Canadian horticultural industry. In Alberta, the industry's 1992 gross revenue was \$80 million.

"There are many growers, and prospective growers, looking for technical information to help them in production diversification and development," she adds. "With research and training, this industry has a very high potential growth rate. We plan to offer short courses for both advanced and new growers through 1994."

The February short course starts with a focus on weeds and weed control. Two Alberta Agriculture specialists will share their expertise during the day. They are weed scientist Rudy Esau and equipment specialist Terry Footz. They'll be joined by Garfield Marshall of Advanced Orchard in Grand Forks, B.C.

Mathers will discuss cold hardiness and container overwintering in the evening.

February 4, the second and final day, concentrates on container culture. Both speakers are from the state of Washington. Bruce Briggs is of Briggs Nursery in Olympia and Frank Alexander is with Grace Sierra in Vancouver. Briggs will cover two broad topics, container media and water. Alexander will look at fertilizer, from soil tests to application.

All speakers will provide hand-outs of their presentation material for short course participants to take home.

Registration for LANTA members is \$130 for the full two days and \$90 for one day. Rates for non-LANTA members are \$155 for two days and \$115 for one day.

For more registration information, contact LANTA in Edmonton at 489-1991 or fax 444-2152.

For more information on speakers and topics, contact Mathers in Brooks at 362-3391 or fax 362-2554.

Contact: *Dr. Hannah Mathers*
362-3391

Ag ambassador school fair coming to Camrose

The Agriculture Ambassador Fair will have a new venue in 1994, as it moves from Medicine Hat to Camrose.

"For the past three years Medicine Hat has hosted the ag ambassador fair. Along the way it grew from a competition and exhibition of student agriculture-related projects into a multi-faceted event," says Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Agriculture in the Classroom program and one of the fair's principal organizers.

The 1994 version in Camrose February 17 and 18 has four components. "We've had most of these events in other fairs, but haven't had all of them in one before," says Gabert.

The main event is the exhibition of individual student and class entries. The competition is open to all grade levels from kindergarten through grade 12. Categories range through social studies, science and language arts. "One of the highlights are the high point awards," notes Gabert. Students who earn the most points in four divisions—grades one through three, grades four through six, grades seven through nine and grades 10 through 12—win a high point award. Each high point winner receives an all-expense paid weekend for their families in Calgary. The Alberta Wheat Pool sponsors the award. Alberta Pool is also the major sponsor of the Agriculture Ambassador program.

School tours will view student and industry exhibits, see special agricultural education performances and try hands-on activities. Tours will run from 9 a.m. through 4 p.m.

The fair will be open to the general public in the evening. From 5 to 9 p.m. they can browse through the exhibits and see special performances such as stock dog demonstrations, autoneering and sheep shearing.

As well, a mini-conference for area teachers will be part of the fair for the second year. Teachers who are their school's agriculture ambassador can share their experiences and achievements.

"Ag ambassador teachers say the opportunity to talk about the ways their peers have incorporated agriculture in their classrooms is valuable. It's give and take at its best," says Gabert. "They give their own experience and take away something someone else has shared."

All the fair's activities will be at the Camrose Regional Exhibition grounds.

For more information on the Agriculture Ambassador School Fair, contact Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2171.

Contact: **Betty Gabert**
427-2171

Lower and leaner is less

In attempting to reduce fat in their diet Canadians sometimes take a wrong direction says an Alberta Agriculture food and nutrition specialist.

Current Health and Welfare nutrition guidelines recommend no more than 30 per cent of calories as fat. Less fat is recommended because diets high in fat have been associated with heart disease and cancer. Reducing dietary fat reduces serum (blood) cholesterol and saturated fat.

"It's true most adults eat more fat than the recommendation. But in the rush to cut down, many people have mistakenly cut out foods that have fat and cholesterol," says Linda St. Onge.

"Eliminating foods isn't the way to a healthy diet," she adds. Red meats, for example, are an important source of iron, zinc and vitamin B₁₂.

Nutritionists suggest the best way to cut down fats is to choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat.

St. Onge notes the agriculture industry has responded to consumer concerns. For example, Canadian beef is 50 per cent leaner now that it was in 1972. Health and Welfare Canada's 1979 "Nutrient Value of Some Common Foods" listed sirloin steak at 27 per cent fat. The 1989 edition lists sirloin at 10 per cent fat.

"Those dramatic changes have come from breeding and production practices as well as Canadian grading and cutting procedures," she says.

Contact: **Linda St. Onge**
427-2412

How much is 30 per cent fat?

The ideal Canadian diet should provide 30 per cent of its calories from fat, but very few Canadians know how that translates on their plate.

Take an average adult who requires 2,000 calories per day. Thirty per cent of those calories can come from fat, or about 600 calories. There are nine calories in each gram of fat. So, 600 calories divided by nine is about 67 grams. The 67 grams adds up to just a little more than a quarter cup.

"That's your allotment from everything," says Linda St. Onge, an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist. "It includes the fat in meat, dairy products, baked goods, salad dressing and margarine."

"A quarter-cup isn't very much, so it can be difficult to figure out how to reduce your fat consumption," she adds. "Nutritionists suggest a very easy guideline, choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat."

Lean and lower-fat products are easier to find on grocery store shelves notes St. Onge. "Both farmers and food processors

recognize consumer wants and that has shown up in stores." Skim and one-per cent milk have less fat than two per cent or homogenized. Lower-fat cheese, yogurt, sour cream and cottage cheese are all in grocery stores. Meat grading changes identify trace, slight or small marbling.

Changing food preparation may be more difficult. "This is the change that has to take place in your home and your kitchen," says St. Onge. She suggests avoiding fried and deep-fried foods. Remove the skin from chicken. Bake, broil or barbeque meat.

"Also cut-out the extras," she adds. "Don't add margarine or butter to vegetables. Avoid sauces and gravy as both have extra fat calories."

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Beef producers meeting the less fat challenge

Canadian beef is 50 per cent lower in fat than it was 20 years ago, in part due to changed breeding and production practices.

"The beef industry, as well as other red meat industries, are proud of how they've met consumer demands for a leaner product," says Linda St. Onge, an Alberta Agriculture food specialist.

St. Onge and Rob Hand, a regional livestock specialist, recently joined forces to produce a four-page information sheet on beef production. They examine nutrition from both sides of the fence—the beef animal and the beef consumer.

"The change in Canadian beef's fat content has been quite dramatic," says St. Onge. "Breeding and production practices as well as meat grading and cutting have produced a product with 50 per cent less fat than beef had in 1972."

Producers control major influences on the make up and flavor of beef. These include the animal's age at slaughter, its level of fatness, the days it was on feed, the type of ration it was fed, its breeding, its gender, any pre-slaughter stress and growth implants.

"There's a complex relationship between these factors and the eventual beef product," says Hand. "For example, the animal's breeding. Different breed groups reach a similar fat level in the file, or longissimus muscle, at different carcass weights. How and what you feed a particular breed will make a difference.

"British breeds, such as Angus and Hereford, reach their finished, or their best carcass size, at a lighter weight than continental breeds such as Charolais. However, a continental breed animal can be finished at a lighter weight if it starts on a high grain diet earlier. Producers use cross-breeds to achieve the best beef animal for their conditions such as available pasture and grain."

What cattle eat also affects meat quality. The high energy grain diets fed before slaughter produce a flavor consumers prefer to an animal that has only eaten forages and grass. Feeds with fish

products, raw soybeans, canola oil or meal and some pasture grasses can cause an undesirable flavor.

Processors also play a role in beef's quality. They control pre-slaughter stress, carcass aging, high voltage electrical stimulation, carcass cooling and carcass cutting.

Canada's new beef grading system may be the most obvious change to consumers. Beef is graded by how much marbling, or internal muscle fat it has. It's visible as flecks or dots of white in the meat. Trace marbling—the leanest meat—is graded A. Slight marbling is AA. The AAA grade is for small marbling.

Fat, however, is a major factor in beef's tenderness and texture. But isn't the only factor. Carcass aging and cooking method also play a role.

"This means teaching consumers how to use a familiar product that has changed," says St. Onge. "For example, leaner meats should be cooked at lower temperatures."

For more information, contact St. Onge in Edmonton at 427-2412 or Hand in Barrhead at 674-8249.

Information on production and cooking beef is also available from the Alberta Cattle Commission in Calgary at 275-4400 and the Beef Information Centre at 275-5890.

Contact: Linda St. Onge Rob Hand
427-2412 674-8249

Venison management course January 11 and 12

Venison management January 11 and 12 is the second of four livestock diversification courses that will be held in Camrose this winter.

"The first course on ostriches was three days, but due to popular demand the next three will be only two days with longer hours," says George Rock, Alberta Agriculture Camrose district agriculturist and a course organizer. All the courses will be held at the Camrose Regional Exhibition.

The venison course runs January 11 and 12. A bison course is February 8 and 9 with llamas and alpacas on the agenda March 8 and 9.

"The courses go beyond production and look at the facts in livestock diversification," says Rock. "Production is covered but so are marketing, developing a business plan and securing credit."

Extension specialists, researchers, producers, government officials and other experts are on all the programs.

Each course costs \$200 (plus \$14 GST). There is a special price of \$350 (plus GST) for any two of the courses or two registrants in the same course.

Registration can be by phone or fax with a credit card or business purchase order. Call 492-3029 or fax 492-1216. For more information, contact the University of Alberta's faculty of extension at 492-3029 or write: Environmental Resource

Management, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2T4.

The courses are jointly presented by the University of Alberta's faculty of extension, Alberta Agriculture, the Camrose Regional Exhibition and the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative.

Course brochures are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: George Rock
679-1210

Agri-News briefs

Advanced shearing school deadline January 15

The first advanced shearing school in Canada in a decade runs February 11 through 13 in Lethbridge. Registration is limited to 15 people and applications must be received by January 15. The course is designed for experienced shears who have already done some custom shearing. Students must bring their own gear. The instructor is Mike McWilliam of Myrtle Creek, Oregon. He has over 20 years experience shearing sheep. At the 1993 U.S. championships he sheared 15 sheep in 19 minutes and 40 seconds with almost no second cuts. He'll discuss handpiece adjustment, sharpening techniques, shearer exercises, competition shearing and judging. The shearing school will be held at the Agriculture Canada research station in Lethbridge. The Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission, Alberta Agriculture and Agriculture Canada are the shearing school sponsors. Tuition is \$100. For more information, call Kim Stanford or Terry Sheen in Lethbridge at 381-5150.

Deadlines approach for Calgary seed fair and hay show

The deadline for hay and silage entries in the 46th annual Calgary Seed Fair and Hay Show is January 21. Seed exhibits must be received by February 16. Entries go to the Alberta Agriculture regional office in Airdrie. The address is Bag Service No. 1, Airdrie, Alberta, T4B 2C1. The seed fair and hay show is March 5 through 8 at the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Grounds. It's held at the same time as the annual Calgary bull sale. Over \$8,000 in prize money is available in the 28 classes. Classes include pedigreed and open seed, hay, greenfeed and silage. There are also two junior classes for participants age 10 through 17. Entry forms and show rules can be picked up at any Alberta Agriculture district office or by calling the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede agriculture department at 261-0271.

Industry conference in Calgary in '94

The annual Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry will be held in Calgary. The conference is February 6 and 7 at the Marlborough Inn. The 1994 conference theme is new directions and opportunities. Among the agenda topics are: export opportunities for value-added products; interprovincial trade; market trends; and, deregulation, harmonization and global competitiveness. For more information, contact the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at 451-5959.

Livestock diversification series continues

Livestock diversification workshops continue in the new year. All the workshops are at the Camrose Regional Exhibition. The venison seminar is January 11 through 12. Bison are the topic February 8 and 9. The final workshop on llamas and alpacas is March 8 and 9. For more information, contact the University of Alberta's extension faculty at 492-3029 or George Rock, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Camrose, at 679-1210.

Central Alberta crop production series through January

A three-part central Alberta crop production series runs three consecutive Wednesdays starting January 12. The Eckville Legion Hall is the location for all the day-long sessions. Day one, January 12, will start with crop production strategies for barley, oats, peas and canola. The afternoon sessions are on marketing. Day 2, January 19, looks at soil fertility, weed control and crop diseases. The final day, January 26 starts with harvest guides, crop conditioning and storage. The wrap-up session focuses on conservation tillage systems and straw and manure handling. For more information, contact Neil Miller in Lacombe at 782-3301.

Pesticide warehouse operation workshop

A pesticide warehouse operation workshop will be held at Olds College in early February. The course is February 1 through 4. For more information, contact Ed Shaw at the college's extension division. His telephone number is 556-8344.

Seed growers meet in Banff

The Alberta branch of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association will hold its 65th annual meeting in Banff January 25 through 27. Keynote speaker is agricultural lawyer Colin Simmons. His topic is transferring farm property and using the capital gain exemption. A new varieties report, national resolutions and an awards luncheon are also on the agenda. Registration fees are \$75. For more information, contact Bill Witbeck in Lacombe at 782-4641.

Olds college strengthens agricultural relationship with Mexico

Olds College is one of the first post-secondary institutions in Canada to sign a collaborative agreement with Mexico. The agreement expands previous partnership training between the college and the University of Zacatecus. The new arrangement, with Mexico's Secretariat for Public Education, allows Olds College to provide cost-effective training in environmental and rural development; create and promote future agricultural training models; transfer new information on technology to producers; and, promote a better understanding of Alberta technical and product advances. Agriculture is the focus of a majority of Mexican educational systems. This includes 200 agricultural high schools and 20 technical institutions. For more information, contact Reg Radke, manager of international education, in Olds at 556-8394.

REDA leadership workshops start in January

The Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) offers its introductory leadership skills workshop January 24 through 28. Level one participants learn more about communication, public speaking, effective meeting management, consensus seeking, leader-group dynamics and other leadership skills. The 15th annual level two workshop is January 17 through 21. Both workshops are held at the Goldeye Centre near Nordegg. Brochures and applications are available from REDA at 14815-119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9 or call 451-5959.

AGRI-NEWS

January 10, 1994

JAN 18 1994

Fox teams up with 4-H

Country music star George Fox is giving something back to the Alberta 4-H movement.

The former 4-H member's **Mustang Heart** cassettes and compact discs (CDs) will be used as a fundraiser by Alberta 4-H clubs and the 4-H Foundation of Alberta.

The fundraising campaign was launched at the provincial 4-H leaders' conference last week (January 7) with Fox in attendance. He also performed for the leaders.

Fox last performed for a provincial 4-H audience at Showcase'92, 4-H's 75th anniversary celebration in Calgary. "This fundraising idea stretches back that far," notes Ted Youck, head of the home economics and 4-H branch.

"After his performance he talked about a fundraising venture."

The idea became a reality in late 1993 when Fox's management company confirmed the details of the fundraising program. Alberta 4-H club members will sell the cassettes for \$14 and the CDs for \$17. Four dollars from each sale will be split between the 4-H club and the 4-H Foundation of Alberta.

"George has taken a keen interest in this project and Alberta 4-H is proud to be associated with him. We have 5,000 special stickers for putting on the cassettes and CDs and we hope we use all of them," says Youck. They will be on sale through 4-H clubs until May 15, 1994.

Mustang Heart, on the WEA label, features songs Clearly Canadian, Daughter of the Rockies and Honest Man.

One of the projects this fundraising effort will support is the Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre at Battle Lake. Fox has agreed to attend the centre's grand opening in July.

As well, prizes will be awarded to the 4-H member who sells the most tapes and CDs and the club with the most sales. The individual winner will attend a George Fox concert, receive a backstage pass for the sound check and have dinner with Fox. The winning club will have Fox join them as a guest at one of their club functions. He'll also perform and autograph photos.

Contact: Jerry Hall Ted Youck
248-8999 422-4444

4-H Hall of Fame membership reaches 41

The Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame's membership now stands at 41 with the induction of two new members on January 8.

"Hall of Fame members are recognized for their service to the 4-H organization. Joe Kallal of Vimy and John Mundie of Innisfail both have deep roots in Alberta's 4-H program," says Ted Youck, head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch.

Kallal began his 38th year of 4-H leadership in the fall of 1993, although his involvement stretches back 52 years. His first contributions were through training members about breeding, feeding, grooming, showing and judging beef cattle. Judging has been a major part of his 4-H involvement. As well as teaching

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members about judging, Kallal travelled Alberta—from Medicine Hat to Manning and from Lloydminster to Edson—as a 4-H beef judge.

He became an assistant leader with the Vimy 4-H Club in 1968 where he's still an assistant leader. He's also been involved with the Tofield and Thorhild beef clubs. As well, he's been a member of the Westlock District Council since 1978.

Kallal is active outside of 4-H with his church and agricultural organizations including Edmonton Northlands, the Victoria Feeders Association, the Pembina Forage Association and the Northern Alberta Hereford Club. He was the founding president of the latter organization.

Fellow inductee John Mundie shares both a long-time 4-H involvement and involvement with the Hereford breed. A member of the Innisfail Beef Calf Club between 1936 and 1944, Mundie served as an adult leader with the Knee Hill Valley 4-H Club starting in the 1960s. One of his enduring contributions to his 4-H district started in 1973 when he began managing the Red Deer and District 4-H Beef show and sale. He continued in that role for 20 years.

In 1983 Mundie was presented with a Friend of 4-H award by the West Central 4-H District Council. The award recognizes individuals who make a major contribution to the 4-H program and its participants in the region.

Mundie has been a continuous member of the Central Alberta Hereford Club since 1943 and was recognized as a half century member last summer. Currently, Mundie is a member of the Olds College Board of Governors.

"One of Mr. Kallal's nominators said Joe was an ideal individual to be nominated and selected for the 4-H Hall of Fame because 'without his dedication and involvement and his sincerity in 4-H, many young people would not have achieved their goals and would not have experienced the opportunities that 4-H has to offer'. This really is the description of all of Hall of Fame members," says Youck.

The Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame is located on the second floor of Alberta Agriculture's headquarters, the J.G. O'Donoghue building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton.

Contact: Mahlon Weir
422-4444

Selling Alberta alfalfa in Asia

One definition of agricultural diversification in Alberta is derived from dehydrated alfalfa and the Asian deer industry.

This diversification's roots go back to a 1990 International Wildlife Symposium in Edmonton where Korean speakers presented information on their deer industry. Trade missions in 1991 and 1992 followed. As well, an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist received funding to travel to Korea and Taiwan to research his masters' thesis on the global deer industry.

The trade missions, tours and survey pointed to an obvious market potential for a processed alfalfa sector looking for new

customers. Both Korean and Taiwanese deer industries were short of roughage. Diets were too high in protein with not enough fibre. For example, dairy rations and a high protein by-product from tofu are two staples in Korean feed. Scours is a common problem because of not enough fibre. Adding alfalfa products to the ration could provide the needed fibre.

This led to a joint project of Alberta Agriculture's marketing and animal industry divisions, the University of Alberta, the Canadian Dehydrators Association and the Alberta Venison Council. They assembled a team to conduct research on feeding recommendations and present them at deer management seminars in both Korea and Taiwan.

"We weren't just selling a product, but a total management package," says trade director Ab Barrie. "The main thrust was management techniques as a means to promote using Canadian alfalfa products."

This complete approach was particularly important in the two Asian countries where the deer industry lacks technical support and official government recognition.

Taiwanese producers were particularly open to the seminars. Over 200 Taiwanese producers attended the four seminars.

"They're literally starved for information," says Bruce Friedel, currently Alberta Agriculture's game farm specialist. "The Taiwanese soaked up information like a blotter," he adds.

Barrie notes much of the management information wasn't even available three years ago. "We're really working in new territory and unexplored markets. That makes it exciting and also important to get our alfalfa products established now ahead of our competitors."

Both Barrie and Friedel were members of the team who did the 1993 seminars. They were joined by Bob Hudson, a wildlife productivity and management professor from the University of Alberta and Garry Benoit and Vern Racz. Both Benoit and Racz represented the Canadian Dehydrators Association on whose behalf the seminars were organized.

Friedel, former Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Wetaskiwin, had toured both countries in 1992 while working on his masters' thesis. He notes Taiwanese deer producers had incorporated some processed alfalfa into their rations when he returned in 1993.

Korean producers were less receptive, but the country's Animal Resource Research Centre based on Kon Kuk is doing more research aimed at using processed alfalfa in deer nutrition programs. The centre was the co-sponsor of a management seminar in October 1993. More management and nutrition seminars are planned for March 1994.

Barrie says the market potential is tremendous. About 65 per cent of a deer's diet should be forage. Based on that ratio, a total national herd of over 170,000 sika and red deer and wapiti in Korea, needs about 87,000 tonnes of forages. By 1995 a national herd of close to 300,000 would need over 151,000 tonnes.

The total Taiwanese herd is smaller at about 40,000 sika and sambar deer. That size of national herd would require about 20,000 tonnes.

"We are using our broader deer management knowledge in reproductive nutrition, handling and disease control to assist our forage processing industry to develop strong relationships with Asia's deer producers," says Barrie.

The deer industry is big business in both countries. The major product antler velvet is a very lucrative venture. Farm gate sales of fresh velvet go as high as \$1,000 per kilogram in Korea.

"So, maximizing overall productivity and velvet production is an important objective in monetary terms for the producers," notes Friedel.

Alberta's deer industry also benefited from the Asian alfalfa promotion says Barrie. "They've been able to refine their own nutrition programs and gain a broader insight of the global deer industry as well as market factors that could effect their industry's development."

Barrie adds the next livestock market target for processed alfalfa is the large Korean and Taiwanese goat sectors.

For more information, contact Barrie at 427-4241 or Friedel at 427-5083.

Contact: *Ab Barrie*
427-4241

Bruce Friedel
427-5083

operation's inventory has decreased by \$35,000. Instead of a \$30,000 profit, the farm actually had an overall \$5,000 loss.

"Without the year-end inventory, you would assume a profit, when in fact, a loss occurred. Decisions made on false assumptions such the one in this example often lead to business difficulties down the road," says Blue.

"It's vital to the success of your farm business to base your decisions on the best information available," he adds. "By keeping adequate records, it's easier to have good information."

Some farmers use cash-based accounting for incomes taxes, but use accrual-based accounting for analyzing their farm business.

"This gives a truer picture of farm profit," notes Blue. "Many farm managers report that they have an increased sense of security and control because they have a more accurate knowledge of their business' financial performance."

For more information, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district or regional office, or your accountant.

Contact: *Neil Blue*
853-8123

Alberta farmers improve pesticide handling

Farmers who took the pesticide certificate program last winter have changed how they handle pesticides and reduced their exposure.

"In a recent survey, 1992-93 course participants said they've adopted many recommended practices," says Keith Price of Alberta Agriculture. Price is one of the course designers.

Some of the changes include wearing coveralls, unlined nitrile gloves, rubber boots, goggles and respirators. "Just as important or maybe more important is that they **aren't** wearing leather boots, gloves, fabric baseball caps and lined rubber gloves," notes Price. "All of those can be continuous sources of pesticide contamination."

While pesticide training is still optional, more and more Alberta farm families are taking the pesticide training course. It covers environmental and personal protection, proper application, protecting food from residues and pesticide legislation.

The survey also showed more farmers, 83 per cent, avoid wearing pesticide contaminated outer clothing in their tractor cabs. Twenty-two per cent report using activated charcoal filters in their tractor cabs. Half the survey participants didn't eat, drink or smoke while using pesticides or before they cleaned-up. Half also said they never went into their home wearing contaminated clothing.

"These numbers are encouraging," says Price, "but, what about the other half? We should see 100 per cent cleaning up before eating, smoking or going inside. If all farmers who took the course applied their new knowledge, we should see poisoning symptoms drop to near zero."

Year-end incentive to measure true profit

Year ends aren't just a time of stop and start, they can also be a good time to measure how your farm business is performing says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Farm families that have a December 31 year-end can use this time to measure their true farm business profit," says Neil Blue, acting regional farm economist in Vermilion.

"It's a good way to start your new year with a better sense of how your business is performing," he adds.

Start by listing business assets and liabilities. Assets are what the business owns. This includes land, buildings, livestock, grain, feed, supplies and accounts receivable. Liabilities are business debts (including operating loans), Canadian Wheat Board advances and accounts payable.

"The list gives you useful information, especially if you file your income tax on a cash basis," he says.

Most farm managers file on a cash basis. While this type of accounting provides greater flexibility for tax planning, it gives limited—and often misleading information—when analyzing a farm business.

For example, a cash-based statement shows a \$30,000 net income in 1993. However, grain and livestock values on December 31, 1993 were \$35,000 less than on January 1, 1993. If you assume all other things remain the same, the farm

Course participants experienced less than half the incidence of moderate pesticide poisonings as farmers as a whole. About 11 per cent of farmers who took the training experienced some symptoms of mild or moderate poisoning such as headaches and nausea.

"The numbers are still too high," stresses Price. "We know that if farmers practice what they learn in the training courses, these figures can be reduced to near zero."

About 2,700 farmers have taken the course since it was launched in 1991. The course has been thoroughly revised and improved for 1994. One of the features is an updated, plain language workbook. A video was added on pesticide water quality. Alberta Agriculture district offices will offer courses through the winter.

Two Alberta companies, United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) and Safety Supply, are encouraging farmers to take the pesticide certificate course by offering discounts. The discounts apply to buying safety equipment.

"These discounts alone can pay for the \$40 course cost," notes Price.

The Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) also offers its members a \$20 rebate coupon. For more information on this rebate, contact Russ Evans at 936-5306.

The training courses are run in conjunction with Olds College. For a course location in your area call Olds College at 556-8355, or call your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Keith Price
427-5330

Bison roaming in your home

If you've thought about buffalo roaming around your home and need a few encouraging words, then a two-day bison management course is for you.

The two-day seminar is February 8 and 9 in Camrose at the Camrose Regional Exhibition. It's the third in a series of diversified livestock courses. Ostrich and venison courses were held in December and January. The final course about llamas and alpacas is March 8 and 9.

"Getting into a new livestock businesses takes more than knowing about production," says George Rock, Alberta Agriculture Camrose district agriculturist and a course organizer. "Producers considering a new or diversified venture need to know all the facts, the advantages and disadvantages as well as the business side."

The practical courses include marketing, developing a business plan and securing credit as well as basic production concerns and techniques. Extension specialists, researchers, producers, government officials and other experts provide the course information.

Each course costs \$200 (plus \$14 GST). There is a special price of \$350 (plus GST) for any two of the courses or two registrants in the same course.

Registration can be by phone or fax with a credit card or business purchase order. Call 492-3029 or fax 492-1216. For more information, contact the University of Alberta's faculty of extension at 492-3029 or write: Environmental Resource Management, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2T4.

The courses are jointly presented by the University of Alberta's faculty of extension, Alberta Agriculture, the Camrose Regional Exhibition and the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative.

Course brochures are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: George Rock
679-1210

Agri-News briefs

Olds 4-Her off to Denver

Laura Jeffery will fly to Denver later this week (January 13) to attend one of North America's premier stock shows. Jeffery, 17, earned the trip at the provincial 4-H livestock judging competition in November. The eight-year member of the Mountainview Dairy Club will be hosted by the Future Farmers of America. The trip will have many firsts for the grade 12 student. It's her first trip to the U.S. As well, Jeffery is from a dairy farm and the Denver Stock Show features beef cattle. However, she says she's particularly interested in the Simmental and Charolais shows. She'll also take in a collegiate judging contest. Jeffery will see some of Denver's sights during her stay. She'll return to Alberta on January 16. The trip is sponsored by the Alberta Canada All Breeds Association. For more information, contact Henry Wiegman of Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch at 422-4444.

4-H leaders met to "Rope the Wind"

The 52nd annual Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference was held in Red Deer January 7 through 9. Delegates, some 300 strong, were told like the wind they have strengths that can be harnessed and they can be a force in building up their members. "Conference sessions focus on ways to help and inspire volunteer leaders with their club activities," says conference chair Mahlon Weir of Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch. Conference topics included injecting pep into club activities, communications training, a 4-H administration survival guide, cinching up a media tie, animal welfare and yearly 4-H dairies. Two new members were inducted into the 4-H Hall of Fame at the conference's banquet. The inductees are Joe Kallal of Vimy and John Mundie of Innisfail. The conference also served as the kick-off to a new 4-H fundraising campaign. Members will be selling George Fox cassette tapes and compact discs to raise funds for their clubs and the 4-H Foundation of Alberta. (See separate stories on inductees and fundraiser in this issue.) Wendy Williams, the 1993 Premier's Award winner, addressed the banquet. The conference also welcomed several out-of-province delegates. Two leaders from each of the Western provinces attended. As well, Montana 4-H leaders came to the conference as part of an on-going exchange that began in 1964. This year's conference host was Alberta's east central 4-H region. For more information, contact Weir in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Please return video to sender

Alberta Agriculture's multi-media library is having a problem many libraries face, overdue returns. More videos and other audio-visual items are being returned late says Ken Blackley, information officer in charge of the central library in Edmonton. "This is especially a problem with videos we buy," he says. "Usually we only have one copy and the demand is high. So, a late return means borrowers who have reserved the item next, as well as those on the waiting list, suffer." Each item is sent out with a shipping notice listing the due date. "That means the date items are due back in Edmonton, not the date to put items in the return courier," stresses Blackley. "Most borrowers do return their items on time," he adds. "Hopefully the rest will get the message before their reserved item is unavailable because someone else didn't return it." A new multi-media catalogue will be available shortly. For more information on library resources and loans, write Ken Blackley, Multi-Media Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Range management society meets Feb. 13-18

The Society for Range Management will hold its 47th annual meeting in Colorado Springs February 13 through 18. Rangeland diversity and responsibility is the meeting theme. The meeting will feature some 200 professional papers plus another 120 poster presentations. Other highlights are a trade show, high school youth forum, and collegiate plant identification and undergraduate range management exam. Special tours of rangeland management at the Air Force Academy, Fort Carson and the Hanna Ranch are also planned. The society is international with over 5,000 members in 48 countries. For more information on registration and registration forms, contact the society's headquarters in Denver at (303)355-7000.

Cropping alternatives '94 Feb. 2 in Taber

The Southern Alberta Conservation Association will look at cropping alternatives at seminar in Taber on February 2. New crops, new markets and new alternatives are on the agenda of the meeting at the Taber Community Centre. The day-long meeting will introduce producers to growing new and non-traditional crops and related soil and water conservation issues. Three speakers in the morning session will discuss new



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crop alternatives, new marketing realities and self-assessment of your operation before growing new crops. A producer panel will discuss production technologies and their impact on crop rotations and conservation. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. with the first session at 10 a.m. The association will report on 1993's activities over the lunch hour. Registration is \$10 and includes lunch. The Southern Alberta Conservation Association is the co-ordinating body for Conservation 2000 Clubs in southern Alberta. For more information, contact Graham Gilchrist in Taber at 223-7907, Rob Dunn in Lethbridge at 381-5118, Murray Brown in Vauxhall at 654-2225, Lorne Kester in Enchant at 739-3913, Dale Culler in Warner at 642-2163 or Jim Hahn in Lethbridge at 381-3400.

Sharpen grain marketing skills

An afternoon seminar in Lacombe offers a review of how to sharpen grain marketing skills. The seminar is February 2 in Lacombe at the Agriculture Building on the corner of 50 street and 51 avenue. Guest speaker is Doug Walkey, Alberta Agriculture regional marketing specialist. Walkey will review cash markets, futures markets and options and also give market outlook information. Husband and wife marketing teams are encouraged to attend. There is no charge for the session and preregistration isn't required. For more information, contact Neil Miller, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lacombe, at 782-3301 or 340-7161.

Be an informed consumer

Nutrients, additives and food processing are words consumers must understand when they pick food from grocery store shelves. University of Alberta's extension faculty is offering a course to give consumers that knowledge. The course, processed food and the consumer, runs five consecutive Wednesday evenings starting February 2. "You'll learn the basics of food processing operations on the four major food groups," says Michael Splinter, the faculty's environmental resource manager. The instructor is Paul Jelen, a university food science and nutrition instructor. He also teaches at the International College of Hospitality Administration in Geneva, Switzerland. Enrolment is limited. Call 492-3029 in Edmonton to register by phone. For more information, contact Splinter at 492-3035.

Ranching for profit school offered in February

The Western Stock Growers' Association is sponsoring a ranching for profit school during February in Calgary. The first session is February 3 through 6 and the second is February 17 through 20. The six-day, intensive course provides ranchers with proven techniques for making more money in agriculture. The school was developed by Stan Parsons of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Parsons has taught ranch management world-wide for more than 20 years. "The principles on which we have been raised are things of the past," says Parsons. "The world's ranchers—even the most successful and promising among them—must develop new techniques that will allow them to survive in today's competitive environment and into the next century." The school covers economics, reproduction, nutrition, grazing management, drought management, fence planning, cell layout, financial planning and management effectiveness. Registrants receive a pre-course package. For more information, contact Pam Miller in Calgary at 250-9121.

AGRI-NEWS

January 17, 1994

1993 weather challenged Alberta farmers

While 1993's average annual temperature was warmer than normal and total precipitation was near normal, the monthly statistics show a truer weather picture says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

Average annual temperatures and precipitation are based on data recorded at 41 climate stations across the province. In 1993 the annual temperature was 0.9°C warmer than the average for the period 1951 through 1980. The 41 climate stations averaged 446.2 mm of precipitation, 11.1 mm above the long-term average.

"Many parts of the province had conditions very different from what these provincial averages show," says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch.

For example, the annual total precipitation at Edson was 366.6 mm, 69 per cent of its long-term average. In contrast, Pincher Creek received more than twice that amount, 739.5 mm. This was 136 per cent of its 1951-1980 average.

"The provincial averages present a simple overall picture of what happened, but the details in the monthly data help us understand the type of year it was and tell the real story of the effect 1993's weather had on agriculture.

"From a crop perspective 1993 was cool and wet. Most regions received significant rains in June, July and August providing adequate moisture for crop growth. At the same time, below normal temperatures slowed crop growth and development," he says.

For eight months of 1993 precipitation was below normal (see attached graph). January was especially dry with an average of 6.6 mm, only 27 per cent of the long-term average. February through May were also dry and raised concerns about a drought.

Fortunately precipitation was above normal when crops most need moisture during June, July and August. June was the wettest month of 1993 with an average of 95.6 mm of rain, 132 per cent of the monthly June normal.

Above normal temperatures were recorded for the first five months of 1993. Three months of below normal temperatures followed and slowed crop growth and maturity (see attached

graph). For example, the July average temperature was 2.4°C below normal.

The year ended with a very warm December with temperatures 5.8°C above normal.

For more information, contact Peter Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

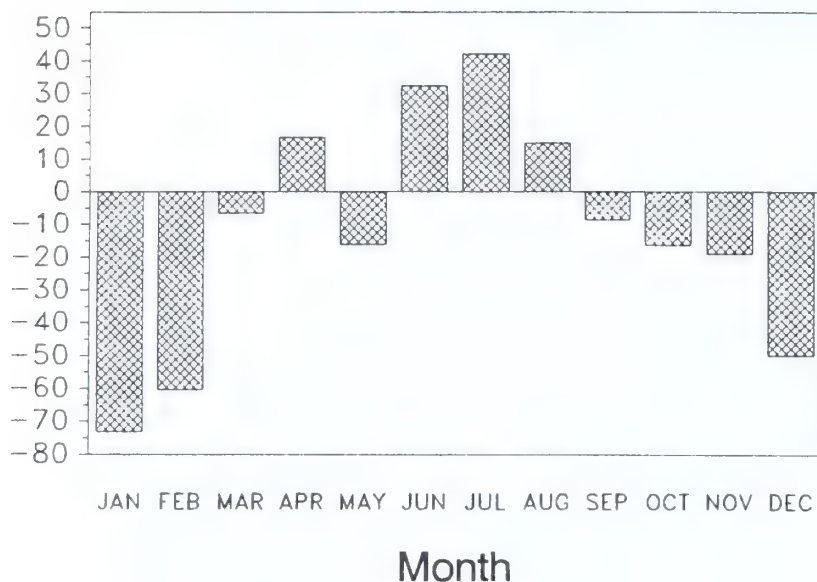
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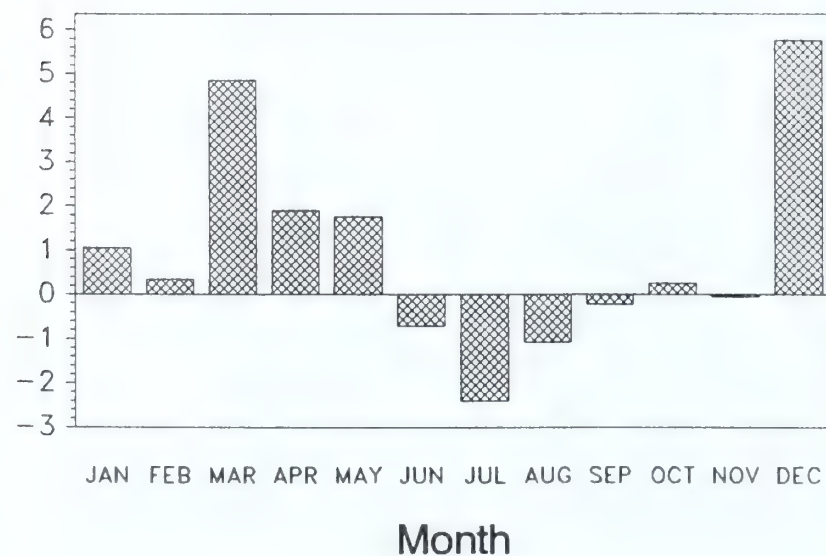
Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

ALBERTA 1993 PRECIPITATION DEPARTURES (Average for 41 Climate Stations)



Based on preliminary data from Environment Canada

ALBERTA 1993 TEMPERATURE DEPARTURES (Average for 41 Climate Stations)



Based on preliminary data from Environment Canada
Normal is defined as the 1951 - 1980 Average

December'93 was warm and dry

Above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation describes December weather in all regions of Alberta says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"The average monthly temperature for the province, based on data from 41 weather stations, was 5.8 degrees warmer than the 1951 to 1980 average of -11.3°C," says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch.

Peace River had an average monthly temperature of -7.2°C, 8.1 degrees warmer than its 1951 to 1980 normal. Calgary also recorded a warm December with an average temperature 6.1 degrees above the long-term average.

As might be expected, the coldest average temperature in December was recorded in northern Alberta. However, High Level's -16.7°C average was 3.5 degrees warmer than normal.

December's monthly precipitation was below normal for most of the province.

"Only two locations, both in the foothills, had above normal precipitation," notes Dzikowski. Edson reported 23.0 mm of precipitation which is 143 per cent of normal. Rocky Mountain House received 24.2 mm, about 2 mm above their monthly normal.

The Crowsnest Pass received the most precipitation in December at 28.4 mm, about normal for southwestern Alberta.

The Peace and central regions reported between 10 and 25 mm of precipitation, about 25 to 75 per cent of normal. In agricultural areas, Onefour reported the lowest total precipitation 0.2 mm.

For more information, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Commercial berry production growing

Signs with arrows to u-pick berry farms have sprouted in more and more places along Alberta roads in the last decade or so.

"Fifteen years ago there were only a few farms where you could pick berries. Now there are well over 100 berry farms across the province that offer the opportunity to pick fresh berries," says Lloyd Hausher, Alberta Agriculture fruit crop specialist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

The number of u-pick operations is only one indication of how commercial berry production in Alberta has steadily grown he adds. "A number of saskatoon producers with large acreages are harvesting and marketing their fresh, frozen and processed products commercially."

Saskatoons along with raspberries and strawberries are the main commercial berry crops in Alberta. Strawberries are particularly popular.

The Alberta Market Gardeners Association aids its members through bulk ordering strawberry plants. "Those orders have also steadily increased," says Hausher. "1993 was the third year it topped one million plants."

Hausher credits customer demand as one reason for both interest in berry production and the growth of this type of farming. "People want locally produced, high quality, reasonably priced product," he says. "As acreages and number of producers increased, awareness of the local product grew and led to an even greater demand."

To help both established and potential growers, Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Market Gardeners Association joined forces to co-sponsor an annual berry production school. The eighth annual school runs February 3 through 5 in Edmonton.

(See separate story in this issue.)

The school has three separate parts. Day one is an introduction to commercial berry production. Day two focuses on strawberry production. Day three is devoted to raspberries and saskatoons.

For more information on the school or berry crop production, contact Hausher in Brooks at 362-3391.

Contact: *Lloyd Hausher*
362-3391

Berry school for a growing industry

The eighth annual Berry Production School in early February offers an introduction for growers-to-be and more advanced production information for established berry growers.

"Alberta's berry industry has grown steadily," says Lloyd Hausher, Alberta Agriculture fruit crop specialist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

"Along the way Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Market Gardeners Association joined forces to sponsor an annual berry production school," he adds. The 1994 school is February 3 through 5 in Edmonton at the Regency Hotel.

Day one is an introduction to commercial berry production. It's aimed at new producers or people contemplating the commercial berry business. The focus is basic start-up requirements including site selection, proximity to markets, market potential, shelterbelts and irrigation.

"Experienced producers will make presentations about their operations," notes Hausher.

The next two days concentrate on advanced production. Strawberries, both June bearing and day-neutral, are the focus on February 4. Floricane and primocane raspberry production as well as saskatoons are the subjects on February 5.

"These sessions will be more technical and aimed at management. They are designed for people already in the commercial berry business," adds Hausher.

For more information on the school or berry production, contact Lloyd Hausher at 362-3391 in Brooks.

Contact: *Lloyd Hausher*
362-3391

Commercial farm kitchen jam seminar January 28

Farm kitchens are renowned for turning nature's bounty into jams, jellies, pickles and other preserves. If you're someone who wants to go a step further and start commercial production, the Alberta Market Gardeners Association has a seminar for you.

The commercial farm kitchen jam production seminar is January 28 at the Regency Hotel in Edmonton.

"The seminar will be of interest to commercial berry growers and anyone else who plans to produce commercial jams, jellies and pickles," says Lloyd Hausher, Alberta Agriculture fruit crop specialist.

Expert speakers will cover topics such as commercial jam production basics, cost analysis, product development regulations for commercial kitchens, ingredient sources, labelling requirements and health regulations in setting up commercial kitchens.

Among those speakers are Alberta Agriculture food and nutrition specialists Aileen Whitmore and Linda St. Onge, and food scientist Susan Lutz. Other speakers are Bill Chrapko, an Edmonton Board of Health inspector, and Bev Uibel, a food officer with Agriculture Canada.

"Of special interest will be Sharon Macfarlane's presentation. She will share her experiences in setting up and operating a commercial kitchen," notes Hausher.

Macfarlane has a market garden in Strathmore. She recently installed a commercial kitchen on her farm and now makes over 60 jams, jellies, relishes, pickles and other products. She markets them through specialty shops and Farmers' Markets in the Calgary area.

Pre-registration isn't required. The seminar fee at the door is \$20 for Alberta Market Gardeners Association members and \$30 for non-members.

For more information, contact Hausher in Brooks at 362-3391 or Tam Volk, association president, in Bon Accord at 921-2272.

Contact: *Tam Volk* *Lloyd Hausher*
921-2272 362-3391

Canola market showed strength in December

The canola market showed real strength through December says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"There was strong buying interest from both domestic and export markets," says Larry Ruud of the market analysis and statistics branch.

Canola is priced very competitively to other oilseeds in the market he adds. Edible oil prices rallied while meal prices remained relatively weak. "That combination favors crushing canola over competing oilseeds such as soybeans because of canola's high oil content," says Ruud.

Canola typically has 42 per cent oil, while soybeans average about 17 to 18 per cent oil. "With this type of advantage, canola demand will be strong through this crop year," he adds.

This is also a good market for pricing canola, he says, as well as to continue selling canola. "Prices are now in a high, seldom seen range. The peak is difficult to predict, and prices will likely be very volatile between now and next fall," he says.

Contact: Larry Ruud
427-5386

Co-operative program in computerized business management

Central Alberta farmers and ranchers can take part in a unique co-operative program on computerized business management.

The course will be offered through Alberta Agriculture's Red Deer district office starting at the end of January and running for two months. However, the course involves a number of partners including Olds and Red Deer Colleges and the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative.

"The course combines hands-on classroom and computer lab experience with practical application," says Ted Nibourg, district agriculturist. Participants will develop analytical skills as well as learn how to use up-to-date computer software.

"The instructor will also visit each participant's operation during the course. This allows specific training for different situations and needs," he adds.

The only pre-requisite participants need are good DOS/IBM compatible computer skills. "This isn't a computer training course," emphasizes Nibourg. "It's showing how computers can aid business management."

The program is designed for the farm management team whether husband-wife, siblings, parent-child or individual business partners. Classes are Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7 to 10 p.m. at Red Deer College's computer labs.

"Another important element of the course is that it is co-operative extension," notes Nibourg.

For more information on the computerized farm and ranch business management course, contact Nibourg in Red Deer at 340-5364.

Contact: Ted Nibourg
340-5364

MAP has ingredients for success

Take one New Zealand farmer, add a few nutrition myths, a dash of retirement planning, two cups of market outlooks, stir in an ethanol debate, add the secrets of high yield producers and you have part of the recipe for a leading-edge agricultural conference.

The conference is Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP '94) from February 1 through 3 in Red Deer.

"There's still time to register," notes conference chair Alan Ford. Brochures and registration forms are available at Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) district offices.

"MAP blends the theoretical and the practical and is designed for all forward-thinking farmers," adds Ford. "Expert speakers provide leading-edge information on subjects related to farm business management, communication, financial planning, technology, marketing and trade."

Alberta Agriculture, in partnership with other organizations and companies, has presented an annual farm management conference since 1978. MAP'94 is a joint project of ADC and Alberta Agriculture.

Conference keynote speaker is Brian Chamberlin, a New Zealand farmer and past president of the Federated Farmers of New Zealand. Chamberlin will open and set the tone for the first two days of the conference. He'll describe how New Zealand farmers reacted to losing income support programs and changed agricultural policy through the mid-1980s. He'll also tell how the agriculture industry has changed and survived.

MAP's concurrent sessions during the first day will focus on macro-economic issues in Western Canadian agriculture. They include: nutrition mythconceptions; a short-term Canadian economic outlook; Alberta's new Environmental Protection Act; weather patterns; the changed grain marketplace; and, a panel discussing the truth about what we eat.

Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister, is scheduled as the dinner speaker on the first evening. The "feast of Alberta" meal features Alberta products.

Concurrent sessions for day two emphasize strategies for successful farm managers. Topics include family communication on the farm, short-term crop and livestock outlooks, insurance as a management strategy, management records, retirement planning, secrets of high yield producers and transferring the family farm.

Day three starts with a session that asks the question whether Canada should see New Zealand in the mirror. Daryl Kraft, agricultural economist, will discuss the similarities and differences between Canada and New Zealand. Doug Radke, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister, will discuss the department's role in helping farmers adjust.

Day three's morning topics are diversified livestock, an introduction to computers, holistic farming and biotechnology. A debate on whether Alberta should have a fuel ethanol industry is in the afternoon.

Single day and three-day package registration packages are available. Single day registration is \$80.25 per person or \$133.75 per couple. The three-day package price is \$187.25 per person or \$294.25 per couple. The fee includes GST and some meals.

Contact: Alan Ford Donna Fleury
421-8911, 556-4240
ext. 1720
679-1720

Agri-News briefs

Direct seeding seminars in Westlock, Radway and Calmar

A direct seeding seminar is coming to three communities on three different days in early February. The seminars are for farmers who want to further investigate and develop a direct seeding system for their farm. The seminar will be held in Westlock on February 8, Radway on February 9 and Calmar on February 10. Registration starts at 9 a.m. and sessions at 9:30 a.m. The morning features varietal differences in canola and barley, weed management and fertilizer recommendations. Manning conservation farmer Henry Graw, a former provincial conservation farmer of the year, will also describe his experience. The afternoon starts with harvest systems followed by row spacing. The seminar wraps up with a producer panel and a discussion of local practices. Registration is \$20, or \$15 if the farmer has a pesticide certificate. For more information, contact the Alberta Agriculture district office in Westlock at 349-4465, in Thorhild at 398-3993 or Leduc at 986-8985.

Local sales likely best for feed wheat

Local cash prices likely offer the best return for feed wheat says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Watch for local prices to be competitive with the Canadian Wheat Board for your number three grade wheat," says Larry Ruud. At the end of December, cash prices in southern Alberta were near \$100 per tonne. "Feed wheat prices are expected to strengthen some over the winter. This should provide an opportunity to move #3 grade wheat into the local market if sales to the CWB are restrictive," he adds. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Meat goat production seminar January 22

Farmers interested in raising meat goats are invited to a one-day seminar January 22 in Calmar. Sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Goat Breeders Association, the seminar focuses on meat goat production with an emphasis on costs and returns. Art Tilma, a long-time meat goat producer, is one of the speakers. The recently completed meat goat feasibility study will be unveiled and discussed by Robin Knudsen of Olds. The study was commissioned by the Western Caprin Breeders Association. Consultant Ian Clark, sponsored by Alberta Agriculture's cattle and sheep branch, is the other speaker. Registration is \$25 for Alberta Goat Breeders Association members and \$50 for non-members. If you plan to attend, please call Lesley Jackson, association manager at 985-3863, or the Alberta Agriculture district office in Leduc at 986-8985.

Consumers and food discussion February 3

New Zealand farmer Brian Chamberlin and University of Alberta professor Glen Mumey will discuss the effects of reducing farm subsidies on retail food prices February 3. The meeting will be held at the Provincial Museum's auditorium in Edmonton starting at 7 p.m. In 1984 New Zealand stopped its publicly funded farm support programs. Chamberlin, a former president of the Federated Farmers of New Zealand and currently a member of New Zealand's international policy council on agriculture and trade, will tell how that change affected farmers and consumers.

As Canadian governments attempt to balance budgets, agriculture industry experts say the Canadian food industry faces similar changes. Mumey, a finance and adjunct agricultural economics professor at University of Alberta, will discuss what implications the New Zealand experience could have for the Canadian food industry. The meeting is sponsored by the Alberta Home Economics Association (Edmonton branch). Members can attend free of charge. Registration is \$5 for non-members. To register, call Maureen Barnes at 939-4351 or 460-8269.

Video examines developing and marketing a food product

If you have an idea for a food you think will be a hit in the marketplace, be forewarned: only about 10 per cent of new items are even marginally successful. A video, *Developing and Marketing a Food Product*, tells why good ideas are only the beginning. The 30-minutes video also tells what you can do to try and beat the odds. The Saskatchewan Food Talk produced video is now available for loan from Alberta Agriculture's Multi-Media library. For loan information, write the library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

1994 Hog production, prices similar to '93

With no clear trend of increasing or decreasing hog numbers in the U.S., 1994's most likely scenario is similar production and prices as in 1993 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "However, because of sharply higher feed costs in the U.S., margins will definitely be reduced south of the border and Alberta producers should have a cost advantage," says Ron Gietz. Gietz predicts average Alberta slaughter hog prices as slightly above last year's. His projection for February is \$1.40/kg dressed compared to \$1.39 last year. The margin may be wider by June, with a projected \$1.60/kg compared to 1993's June average of \$1.54. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Forage council annual meeting Feb. 8

The Alberta Forage Council will hold its annual meeting February 8 at the Cedar Park Inn in Edmonton. The agenda includes reports from all council members. Members include nine forage associations, the Alberta Cattle Commission, Alberta Agriculture, the Canadian Forage Council, the Alberta Forage Variety Committee and the Forage Industry Advisory Committee. The meeting is open to anyone with an interest in forages. For more information, contact Laurel Atkin at 929-2019.

U.S. Beef supplies higher this winter

U.S. beef supplies are substantially higher this winter with much higher slaughter weights and larger anticipated marketings says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "This first quarter bubble in beef supplies should be large enough to counteract much of the normal seasonal tendency to rising prices between January and April," says Ron Gietz. Weather could still be a factor he adds. "Prolonged or bad storms could change this picture." For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Barley, oat growers meet Feb. 16-18

The Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA) is holding its 17th annual convention and trade fair February 16 through 18 in Banff. The WBGA will be joined by oat growers in a joint conference. For more information, contact the WBGA office in Calgary at 291-3630.

Crow benefits requires sin or tax number

The new year brought a new requirement for farmers who make Crow Benefit Offset program claims. Starting January 4, 1994 farmers must supply their social insurance, corporate, trust or partnership number before they can be issued cheques. Alberta Agriculture is required to collect these numbers because of recent changes to federal Income Tax Act regulations. Many farmers who sell feed grain have already sent in their numbers. Anyone who hasn't, should take their number with them when they take program certificates to their local Alberta Agriculture district office. For more information, contact Brenda Blakey in Edmonton at 422-0015.

AGRI-NEWS

January 24, 1994

CANADIANA

MAR 2 1994

Solving measurement problems the AFMRC way

Without a way to measure what's being investigated research can't go very far.

Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre (AFMRC) staff have been solving their own electronic and measurement problems for the last few years. Now, the centre is sharing this expertise by offering custom solutions to measurement problems.

The centre is already well known for providing complete testing and data gathering to its clients. "We're continuing to expand our role as a centre of excellence for engineering and agricultural research," says Rob Maze, a project engineer at the Lethbridge-based centre.

The new service meets the need of a growing high-tech agriculture industry he adds. "The AFMRC is simply responding to client needs. Since high technology is quickly becoming the solution to a number of agricultural problems, the centre is using its experience to expand its role with the industry and other researchers."

Centre staff have already worked with a number of organizations looking for specific measurement techniques. Projects have ranged from a sensor that measures how many times a cow chews per minute to a complete data gathering system for a machinery manufacturer.

"We've currently involved in a number of projects designing measurement systems and prototype transducers for the industry as well as other researchers," notes Maze.

"If companies are involved in prototype design and testing, or require more than a short term solution to gathering data, our engineering teams can provide the answer," he adds.

The centre has many different electronic and measurement capabilities. Engineering teams can develop portable data gathering systems ranging from simple, economic systems up to high speed, high capacity systems. Custom measurement solutions include design, development and testing of transducers.

As well, AFMRC can provide project management overviews for developing test procedures, problem analysis and standard compliance tests.

Teams can also do real time data analysis; in-depth statistical reviews; circuit development, testing, trouble shooting and

fabrication; design and test computer control systems; broad spectrum engineering measurement of physical and chemical quantities; and, in-service training on both measurement and testing.

Private industry and researchers interested in working with the AFMRC can contact Maze or Reed Turner in Lethbridge at (403)329-1212.

Contact: Rob Maze
329-1212

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program ends March 31

The Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program (ACBOP) will end on March 31, 1994.

"There are various reasons why we are making this decision at this time," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister.

"Ending the Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program is consistent with the end of the National Tripartite Stabilization Program for cattle which ended on December 31, 1993. Eliminating these programs allows us to continue to trade in livestock and meat products with the United States and dramatically reduces countervail risks. We must maintain our trading relationship with the U.S.," he says.

The current Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA) method of payment has long distorted feed grain prices. The Alberta government began offsetting this distortion on September 1, 1985 with the Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjustment Program. It paid \$21 per tonne of feed grain.

On July 1, 1987 offset payments continued with the introduction of the \$13 per tonne Alberta Crow Benefit Offset program. On September 1, 1989, ACBOP payments were reduced to the current \$10 per tonne level. When the program ends in March, the Government of Alberta will have offset distortions of over \$450 million caused by the WGTA.

"A major factor in our decision to terminate the program is the successful conclusion to this round of the GATT negotiations," adds Paszkowski. "Export subsidies like the federal WGTA Crow Benefit on grain shipped to port can no longer be tolerated by the international trade policy environment. Under the GATT, this export subsidy must be significantly reduced. It is preferable to convert the WGTA into a trade and production neutral form of support that does not need to be reduced under the GATT. All eyes are now on the federal government.

"Ending the ACBOP anticipates the federal government's reformation of the WGTA to take advantage of the GATT. If we are to be competitive, the federal government must change the method of paying the Crow Benefit to comply with our international trade obligations and remove distortions in domestic grain prices," he emphasizes.

Grain fed to livestock sold up to and including March 31, 1994 will qualify for the \$10 per tonne benefit. Producers will have until August 31, 1994 to submit farm fed claims.

To receive the benefit on purchased grain, the grain must be delivered to feed users by March 31, 1994.

Additional information will be forwarded to producers and feed grain merchants as the program winds up.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus (403)427-2137
Ken Moholity (403)422-9167
C.D. Radke (403)427-2145

New manual on field surveying for conservation projects

Experienced surveyors can learn about specific survey requirements for farm-scale soil and water conservation projects in Alberta through a new manual.

"Survey Guidelines for Soil and Water Conservation Projects" has three sections says Douwe Vanderwel, Alberta Agriculture soil and water conservation engineer.

First, it outlines the steps needed before surveying begins. Second, it describes the general survey requirements for conservation projects. Finally, it details the requirements for projects. This includes erosion control and water management projects as well as common structures such as reservoirs, junctions between channels and culverts.

"Soil and water conservation projects involve managing water in a number of different ways depending on the goal," says Neil MacAlpine, farm water management engineer.

Projects can improve soil moisture for crop production, develop domestic and livestock water supplies, control water erosion and maintain the quality of water as it moves off the farm.

"The manipulation of water requires precise measurements for good planning and design," adds Vanderwel. "Detailed and accurate measurements are as necessary for farm-scale projects as for much larger projects. The engineering survey requirements also vary by project."

For copies of the survey manual, contact Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch in Edmonton at (403)422-6530.

Contact: Douwe Vanderwel 422-4385
Neil MacAlpine 422-6530

Family matters at Decision with Vision conference

Families matter in a lot of ways in rural Alberta, and farm women will celebrate and talk about this fact at an annual conference in Calgary February 24.

The day-long Farm Women Decision with Vision conference chose the family matters theme in recognition of 1994 as International Year of the Family.

"Our keynote speaker will discuss families and the responsibility rural communities have in nurturing this most valued institution in our society," says Maureen Bolen, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Strathmore and one of the conference organizers.

David Irvine is the opening and keynote speaker. Irvine is well known in the agricultural communities. He specializes in helping family business deal with the human side of their operation and has a particular interest in agricultural family businesses.

"His approach is down-to-earth and practical," adds Bolen. "He'll talk about the tremendous changes families have undergone in the last 20 years and salute their resilience in dealing with these changes."

Conference participants can choose two of seven select-a-sessions offered during the rest of the day. Sessions include computers and the family farm, international agriculture, making home-based business work, rural water management issues and rural womens' balancing act.

The conference closes with a hot message about fire. Edmonton firefighter Tim Vandenbrink will discuss how to protect families from fire.

The Decision with Vision conference usually attracts between 200 and 250 people from the neighboring County of Wheatland and Municipal District of Rockyview. "But, the conference is open to anyone who wants to attend," says Bolen.

Registration forms are available at the Strathmore (934-3355) and Airdrie (948-8551) Alberta Agriculture district offices. Registrations before February 1 are eligible for an early bird prize. The registration deadline is February 11.

Contact: **Maureen Bolen**
934-3355



1994 International Year of the Family
Année internationale de la famille



Advanced shearing school circuit comes to Lethbridge

It's been about a decade since the last advanced shearing school was in Canada, but it will return February 11 through 13 in Lethbridge.

The school is part of the U.S. national shearing school circuit. "We persuaded them to come to our side of the border," says Kim Stanford, Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist and course organizer.

"We also got funding help from the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission," she adds.

The course is designed for shearers who already have done some custom shearing. Students are required to bring their own shearing equipment.

"Shearers will get plenty of individual instruction," says Stanford. "And, they'll use their own gear while learning about shearing technique, grinding and equipment maintenance."

The instructor is Mike McWilliam of Myrtle Creek, Oregon. McWilliam is a champion shearer with over 20 years of experience.

"Enrolment is limited to 15, so interested shearers should register quickly," notes Stanford. "We've already had some pre-registration from Alberta and Saskatchewan shearers. We even have a shearer coming all the way from Prince Edward Island."

The three-day course costs \$100. It will be held at Agriculture Canada's sheep barn in Lethbridge.

For registration information, call Terry Sheen in Lethbridge at 381-5150.

Contact: **Kim Stanford** **Terry Sheen**
381-1648 381-5150

Integrated management theme of soil science workshop

Integrated management is the theme of the 31st annual Alberta Soil Science Workshop February 22 through 24 in Edmonton.

"An integrated approach is essential for effective soil management," says Len Kryzanowski, Alberta Agriculture crop nutrition agronomist and chair of the workshop.

"Developing soil management strategies, whether for soil productivity, conservation or environmental concerns, demands looking at and using all disciplines. At the same time, there are more opportunities to use new technologies by linking information sources and methods for making soil management decisions," he adds.

In the opening plenary sessions, four speakers will look at different aspects of integrated soil management. Their topics are environmental auditing, geographic information in agriculture, crop growth modelling and soil conservation cropping systems.

"Each of these speakers will review the current situation then look at the future," notes Kryzanowski.

Four separate technical sessions run on February 24. Soil inventory, soil conservation, soil reclamation and soil fertility technical sessions feature current research.

As well, the workshop has two volunteer paper sessions and a poster session.

The workshop is open to anyone who is interested in soil science. For more information, contact Kryzanowski at the soil and crop management branch in Edmonton at 427-6361.

Contact: **Len Kryzanowski**
427-6361

Agri-News briefs

February field pea workshops

A series of field pea workshops will be held across central Alberta in late February. The first is February 21 at Olds College's Duncan Marshall Theatre. Contact Steve Archibald or Ron Woolf at the Alberta Agriculture district office in Olds at 556-4220. The second workshop is at the Standard Community Hall on February 22. Contact John Portail or Dennis Lowry at the Strathmore district office at 934-3355. The next workshop is at Drumheller's Stampede Barn on February 23. For more information, contact John Huffman at the Drumheller office at 823-1675. Three Hills Community Centre is the location for the February 24 workshop. Contact Ken King at the Three Hills office at 443-8523. Pre-registration is required by February 18 for these workshops. The final workshop is February 25 in Lacombe at the Agriculture Canada research station library. For more information, contact the Alberta Agriculture Lacombe district office at 782-3301.

North American seed fair enteies due Feb.18

Entries for the North American Seed Fair at Lethbridge's Ag-Expo '94 are due February 18. Silage entries are due one week earlier, February 11. The seed fair runs the same time as the Ag-Expo, March 2 through 5. It is the largest show of its kind on the continent. Open and Pedigreed grand champion are chosen from over 50 classes. For more information, contact Elizabeth Tokariuk, chair of the North American Seed Fair committee, at (403)381-5127.

Woodlots course Feb.28 and March 1

The University of Alberta has added a woodlots course to its extension program. The woodlots course will be February 28 and March 1. Its focus is on rural diversification and sustainability. During 1991-92 over 800,000 cubic metres of wood were cut on private land at an estimated value between \$800,000 and \$5 million. The course will cover what is a woodlot, an introduction to woodlot management, management planning, selling options, non-timber forest products and marketing options. Participants will also look at a woodlot case study to develop a woodlot business plan. Enrollment is limited to 30 participants. Early bird registration, before February 11, is \$135. Registration after that date is \$150. For more information, contact Michael Splinter at 492-1216.

Local agriculture and the global environment conference

Sustainable Agriculture and Global Environment (SAGE) is holding a local agriculture and global environment conference February 18 and 19 in Edmonton. Conference speakers will discuss the connections between agriculture, environment and international development. Conference workshop topics are varied and reflect SAGE's membership of soil scientists, farmers and people interested in food issues, the environment and international development. Dennis Vriend, an organic producer in the Edmonton area, will look at agriculture from nature's perspective. Susan Darby, an organizer of Calgary's community shared agriculture group, will talk about that concept. Soil Conservation Association of Neerleandia (SCAN) representatives will share their experience in promoting change in rural Alberta. Other conference workshop topics are a Manitoba and Uganda project; restrictive covenants and perpetual easements; sustainable agriculture in Thailand; and, organic farming in Alberta. For more information, contact Shirley Ross at CUSO at (403)421-4387.

Reclamation, revegetation and restoring ecosystems

The Alberta Native Plant Council is holding a workshop on restoring ecosystems February 26 at the University of Alberta. The day-long meeting will be followed by the council's annual general meeting. Topics include successful native plant production, the ethics of reclamation with native plants, native grass genetic diversity, botanical bullies, reclamation in Alberta and sprigging. Registration includes lunch. Pre-registration is \$20 before February 11 and \$25 after that date. Space is limited. For more information, contact Ann Smreciu at 461-5950 or Donna Lawrence at 430-9654 in the evenings.

Xeriscaping, landscaping of the future courses

Attractive low input, low maintenance landscapes are in demand. Xeriscaping fits the bill. It combines landscape design, plant selection, practical turf areas, soil conditioning, mulches, efficient irrigation and appropriate maintenance. Experts from across Western Canada will discuss how-to use xeriscaping principles at a two-day University of Alberta extension course February 17 and 18. It will be followed by a one-day course on February 19, an introduction to xeriscaping for homeowners. For more information, contact Michael Splinter in environmental resource management at 492-3035.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

FEB 22 1994

January 31, 1994

Agriculture restructuring emphasizes improved service to clients

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development is changing the way it provides services to the agriculture and food industry by amalgamating rural offices into one-stop shopping centres.

The ministry will focus more on providing improved, more specialized services to its clients says Walter Paszkowski, Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister.

"These changes are part of a larger strategic planning process, and it's not just in the field," says Paszkowski. "Over the past several years, significant restructuring has taken place in administration in Edmonton. Now the changes at the field level will bring the ministry one step closer to the agriculture industry's vision of the future."

Thirteen Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development district offices will close. As well, the current six regions will become five as the administrative duties of the Airdrie regional office will be divided between Red Deer and Lethbridge regional offices.

The merger of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) and Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation will also bring changes. One is a new name, the Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). Several of the lending and insurance offices will also be combined.

As well, the majority of public lands offices and one irrigation office will be merged with district offices to provide better customer service and to streamline operations.

Offices planned for closure will close on or before April 29, 1994. In some cases, combining offices will take longer. Because of crop insurance timetables, affected AFSC insurance offices will remain open until June 30, 1994.

In most cases, producers will only need to visit one office to get information on all the department's programs and services. Over 95 per cent of Alberta's producers will remain within a 30-minute drive to the nearest agricultural office.

By restructuring offices and field positions, Alberta Agriculture's field services sector will save approximately \$2.5 million. The ADC and AHCIC merger saves approximately \$1 million in

manpower costs. Further savings of about \$2 million will come from more efficient service delivery.

"It's important to note that the decision to restructure our extension services is a business decision and not a reflection of the worth of our current staff," says Paszkowski. "Their service to the industry has been exemplary."

"We're revamping the department's field services so we can continue to provide the best possible service to the industry," he adds. "Creating Tomorrow participants said they wanted more specialized services available at the front line. It will take a bit of time as we move through a transition period, but we're responding to what our clients have told us they want."

"The Government of Alberta and industry both recognize that as the face of agriculture changes both at home and abroad, we must also change the way we do business to take advantage of market opportunities and realities, or we will lose our competitive advantage in the international marketplace."

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We believe these actions to be innovative. They will allow us to better serve our clients while meeting our budget targets."

In *Creating Tomorrow*, the province-wide consultation process held in 1992 and 1993, the agriculture and food industry set in place its vision of the future and defined its needs. Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development then held focus groups on one-stop shopping and public consultations on the ministry's proposed business plan. These consultations confirmed industry's support to restructure services provided by the ministry. This extensive public input allowed the ministry to align its priorities and goals for the future with those of the industry.

Further details regarding the ministry's business plan will be made available after the provincial budget is brought down on February 24, 1994.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/ C. D. Radke
Brian Hlus (403)427-2145
(403)427-2137
Les Lyster Bob Splane
(403)427-2440 (403)679-1302

Offices close, move and combine

While a number of Alberta Agriculture offices will close or combine between now and the end of April, the department's services will still be very accessible.

Over 95 per cent of Alberta's producers will remain within a 30-minute drive to the nearest agriculture office. Only 10 to 15 per cent of Alberta's producers will be effected by office amalgamations and closures.

Thirteen Alberta Agriculture offices will close. **[The complete list follows this story.]** As well, the administrative duties of the south central regional office in Airdrie will be divided between Red Deer and Lethbridge.

Also part of the restructuring is the merger of the Alberta Agriculture Development Corporation (ADC) and Alberta Hail Crop Insurance Corporation (AHCIC) offices into the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). Several AFSC lending and AFSC insurance offices will be combined.

A small percentage of all producers will be affected as 12 of the insurance offices are closed. Four will reopen in other communities.

As well, the majority of public lands offices and one irrigation office will be merged with Alberta Agriculture district offices to provide better customer service and to streamline operations.

Most offices slated for closure will do so on or before April 29, 1994. In some cases, office amalgamations will take longer. Because of crop insurance timetables, affected AFSC insurance offices will remain open until June 30, 1994.

In most cases the changes will be an advantage for producers. They will need to visit only one office to get information on all programs and services provided by the agriculture ministry.

As office locations are restructured, so will the duties of staff currently located at the offices. All district generalist extension positions will be revised to emphasize the department's move toward providing producers with more specialized extension services.

As a result, district home economist and district agriculturist positions will be replaced by specialist positions. An increase in the number and types of specialist services will provide more detailed knowledge in areas such as agronomy, beef, farm management and rural development. Some existing regional specialists will move to district offices.

Approximately 50 positions will be abolished in conjunction with office closures as the department changes the focus of extension services.

All current district and regional extension staff will be invited to take part in the selection process for the specialist positions. Staff training will play a significant role in the move toward providing more specialized services.

"It's important to note that the decision to restructure our extension services is a business decision and not a reflection of the worth of our current staff," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister. "Their service to the industry has been exemplary."

For more information regarding specific regions, contact the regional directors:

Ralph Berkan Vermilion (403)853-8106	John Knapp Barrhead (403)674-8264	Yvonne Grabowsky Fairview (403)835-2295
Glen Werner Airdrie (403)948-8500	Allan Hall Red Deer (403)340-7611	Don Young Lethbridge (403)381-5130

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development—Office closures

Alberta Agriculture District offices:

Bow Island	Pincher Creek
Vauxhall	Warner
Ponoka	Ryley
Two Hills	Lloydminster
Thorhild	Fort Saskatchewan
Edson	Eaglesham
Peace River	

Regional office:

Airdrie

Irrigation office:

Vauxhall

Public lands office:

Edson (relocated to Evansburg)

AHCIC

District offices:

Pincher Creek

Warner

Calgary (relocated to Airdrie)

Didsbury (relocated to Olds)

Morrin (relocated to Drumheller)

Wetaskiwin

Ryley

Two Hills

Kitscoty (relocated to Vermilion)

Bonnyville

Morinville

Sanguo

Regional office:

Didsbury

Falher

Vegreville (relocated to Vermilion)

ADC

District offices:

Calgary (relocated to Airdrie and Strathmore)

Two Hills (relocated to Vegreville)

Peace River (relocated to Grimshaw)

Regional office:

Airdrie

Agricultural stakeholders aware of fiscal realities

Results of public meetings on the agriculture ministry's three year business plan were recently released by the department's minister and the chair of the standing policy committee on agriculture and rural development.

The results were published in a report, "Toward a business plan: A summary of public responses".

At the public meetings, hosted by the standing committee, agriculture and food industry stakeholders expressed their awareness of the need for balanced government spending to address the provincial deficit.

"We are pleased with the overwhelming positive public response to the meetings," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister. "We received excellent input from those who attended the meetings, as well as those who submitted completed written response forms."

"This process reaffirms our government's commitment to gaining stakeholders' input regarding their industry and the future direction of the agriculture ministry. We are confident that the department's restructuring and reallocation of funds will assist the industry's ability to gain access to and respond to domestic and world market opportunities."

Over 900 people from throughout the industry participated in the public consultation process. Public meetings were held between November 29 and December 2 in Grande Prairie, Lacombe and Vauxhall. Two meetings were also held in Calgary and Red Deer where approximately 135 members of the Alberta Food Processors Association, the Agriculture Forum and the Agriculture and Food Council provided input.

"We are incorporating the results of the public meetings into the three-year business plan for the agriculture ministry," adds Barry McFarland chair of the standing policy committee on agriculture and rural development. "We are sharing the business plan development with members of the industry. It's their direct input that is helping to determine the shape of the business plan."

Paszkowski adds the ministry's business plan will be released as part of the February 24 provincial budget.

Participants who requested copies of the report will receive a copy in the mail. Additional copies will be available at local Alberta Agriculture district offices and the department's policy secretariat in Edmonton. Call 427-2417 for more information.

Contact:	<i>Barry McFarland</i>	<i>Brian Hlus/Dwight Dibben</i>
	427-3020	427-2137
	<i>C.D. Radke</i>	<i>Barb Stroh</i>
	427-2145	427-2417

Cattle producers check-off plebiscite starts Feb. 14

Alberta's cattle producers will have the opportunity to vote on whether a non-refundable checkoff fee on cattle sales will continue or whether it should be refundable.

Eligible producers will have a number of opportunities to take part in the plebiscite. Voting starts on February 4.

An eligible producer is an individual or the representative of a partnership, corporation or other business unit that has sold cattle and paid a service charge in the last 18 months. Voters must be 18 years of age.

A series of 35 producer information meetings will be held across the province. **[See following list for dates, locations and times.]** At each meeting industry representatives will be able to present reasons for and against a refundable checkoff. A question period follows. Then producers can vote.

Plebiscite voting is immediately after each meeting. Alberta Agriculture staff will act as deputy returning officers and poll clerks during the supervised vote.

There are two other ways to vote. When the producer information meetings conclude on February 24, producers can vote at Alberta Agriculture offices across the province and the special areas office in Consort.

Producers can also call Alberta Agriculture's central program support office in Edmonton for a mail-in ballot. The mail-in ballots will be available from February 14 and must be postmarked no

later than March 4. Call toll-free 1-800-232-9479, or in the Edmonton area call 422-0137.

Cliff Downey, the former Alberta Farmers' Advocate, is the plebiscite's official returning officer. For more information on plebiscite, call him in Edmonton at 427-2433.

Contact: *Cliff Downey*
427-2433

Producer Information Meetings and Voting Opportunities for Refundable or Non-refundable Checkoff

February 16	Lomond	1:30 p.m.	Lomond Community Centre
February 16	Brooks	7:30 p.m.	Tel Star Motor Hotel
February 22	Foremost	7:30 p.m.	Legion Hall
February 24	Medicine Hat	7:30 p.m.	Moose Hall
February 14	Pincher Creek	7:30 p.m.	Auction Mart
February 16	Lethbridge	7:30 p.m.	Lethbridge Lodge
February 18	Stavely	7:30 p.m.	Community Hall
February 15	High River	7:30 p.m.	Highwood Auction Mart
February 16	Sundre	7:30 p.m.	Seniors Recreation Centre
February 21	Airdrie	7:30 p.m.	Town and Country Centre
February 14	Sedgewick	1:30 p.m.	Legion Hall
February 15	Metiskow	1:30 p.m.	Community Hall
February 16	Pollockville	1:30 p.m.	Community Hall
February 21	Cereal	1:30 p.m.	Cereal Community Hall
February 23	Castor	1:30 p.m.	Community Hall basement
February 16	Innisfail	7:30 p.m.	Legion Hall
February 21	Alhambra	7:30 p.m.	Alhambra Community Centre
February 23	Elnora	7:30 p.m.	Elnora Community Centre
February 15	Camrose	7:30 p.m.	Camrose Regional Exhibition Building
February 16	Winfield	7:30 p.m.	Community Centre
February 22	Ponoka	7:30 p.m.	Vold, Jones and Vold Auction Market
February 24	Stony Plain	7:30 p.m.	Provincial Building
February 15	Westlock	7:30 p.m.	Westlock and District Community Hall
February 16	Thorhild	7:30 p.m.	Community Centre
February 21	Rich Valley	7:30 p.m.	Community Hall
February 24	Carrot Creek	7:30 p.m.	Community Hall
February 15	Kitscoty	7:30 p.m.	Wheatfield Inn
February 17	Andrew	7:30 p.m.	Community Centre
February 21	Elk Point	7:30 p.m.	Elks Hall
February 14	Ft. Vermilion	1:00 p.m.	Agriplex
February 14	Grimshaw	7:30 p.m.	Mile Zero Inn
February 16	Fairview	7:30 p.m.	Dunvegan Inn
February 21	Grande Prairie	7:30 p.m.	Trumpeter Inn
February 22	Valleyview	7:30 p.m.	Valleyview Memorial Hall
February 17	Rycroft	7:30 p.m.	Courtesy Corner

Rural Crime Watch workshop comes to Wetaskiwin

Rural Crime Watch week in Alberta will wind-up with a provincial workshop in Wetaskiwin February 4 and 5.

The second annual awareness week starts on January 31 and runs through February 5. The annual provincial workshop brings together members of Rural Crime Watch associations.

"The 1994 workshop theme is you can stop crime in motion," says Alberta Agriculture's Cliff Munroe. "Workshop speakers will discuss topics related to this theme and their crime watch activities."

The workshop kicks off on the evening of February 4 with a wine and cheese social at the Reynolds Alberta museum. "Two of the headline guest speakers the next day are Alberta's justice minister Ken Rostad and victims' rights advocate Scott Newark," he adds.

Rostad will speak during the morning of February 5. Also on the agenda is an introduction to Youth Crime Stoppers, a school program.

Poster contest awards will be presented in the afternoon by Joanne Lemke of the Alberta Cattle Commission. The contest, open to students in grades one through nine, had the same theme as the workshop. There are cash prizes for first through third in each grade. Lemke will also talk about the commission's role in the Rural Crime Watch program.

Other afternoon sessions include a report on the co-operative efforts between crime watch and the Report-A-Poacher program. Judy Beebe from the Camrose Women's Shelter will discuss family violence. Newark is the banquet speaker. He'll discuss young offenders and the parole system.

Displays will be open throughout the day at the Wetaskiwin Drill Hall.

The 1994 conference is hosted by the Hillside Rural Crime Watch Association, the Falun Rural Crime Watch Association and the Gwynne Range Patrol. For more information on the workshop, contact Gail Kaiser, workshop co-ordinator, at 352-5282. For more information on the Rural Crime Watch program, contact Cliff Munroe in Edmonton at 427-4241.

Contact: *Cliff Munroe*
427-4241

Dairy seminar focuses on future

Trade and technology will be the chief subject areas at the Western Canadian Dairy Seminar February 22 through 25 in Red Deer.

"Our overall theme is a vision for the future," says Brian Cameron, Alberta Agriculture dairy management specialist and a member of the seminar's organizing committee.

"Two concerns for the industry are trade with new GATT rules and use of bovine somatotropin (BST)," he adds. "Both topics are on the seminar's agenda."

For the first time the seminar will have a keynote speaker. Rob McLaughlin, dean of the Ontario Agricultural College at the University of Guelph, will kick-off the seminar's sessions on February 23. His topic is "wanted: dairy leaders with a vision".

McLaughlin will be followed with a morning session on production and processing. The afternoon session features the future of animal breeding.

Another format change is concurrent sessions. "This allowed us to expand the program," notes Cameron. Day two of the seminar, February 24, will have two different morning and afternoon sessions. Participants can choose between nutrition and animal health, and survival of the fittest in the morning. The afternoon sessions are on new technologies and working together. A third afternoon session—the 10 best ways to maximize profit—follows. Speakers will provide suggestions for increasing dairy profits.

The seminar concludes with a morning session on February 25. Speakers will discuss different aspects of animal management and welfare.

"Registration rates have stayed the same for the last three years," notes Cameron. The early bird rate is \$125 per person. After February 4 the rate goes up to \$165. There are also single day rates and special rates for persons from the same farm or organization.

Seminar brochures are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or for more registration information call the University of Alberta's animal science department at (403)492-2601 or fax (403)492-9130.

Contact: *Brian Cameron*
427-8906

"Our speakers are from both Canada and the United States," notes Cameron.

One of the American experts is Jeanne Burton. Currently she works for the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Animal Disease Centre in Iowa. She'll speak twice at the conference. First, on selecting animals for disease resistance and then on nutrition, the immune system and animal health.

A Washington state consultant and feed and forage analyst will make two presentations at the seminar. Floyd Hosington started Dari-Tech services in 1986. He'll tell seminar participants about dairying in the Pacific Northwest and discuss effective and profitable new technologies.

Featured banquet speaker is Cyndy Stevenson. On February 24 she'll talk about finding stability in an uncertain world. Stevenson uses "humour and human-ness" in her presentation. She specializes in managing stress, coping with change, relationships, communication and team building.

"The seminar line-up also features well-known experts from Western Canada and other parts of Canada," adds Cameron.

Registration costs remain the same as the last three years. The early bird rate is \$125 per person before February 4 and \$165 after February 4. There are rates for single days, students and people from the same farm or organization.

Seminar brochures are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or for more registration information call the University of Alberta's animal science department at (403)492-2601 or fax (403)492-9130.

Contact: *Brian Cameron*
427-8906

Experts help dairy industry look to the future

Participants at the 1994 Western Canadian Dairy Seminar will look at the future of their industry with help from a number of specialists.

"To start, our keynote speaker will talk about the industry needing leaders with a vision," says Brian Cameron, Alberta Agriculture dairy management specialist and a member of the seminar's organizing committee.

The keynote speaker is Rob McLaughlin, dean of the Ontario Agricultural College at the University of Guelph. The Western Canadian Dairy Seminar is February 22 through 25 in Red Deer. This is its fourth consecutive year in central Alberta.

Session topic areas at the seminar include production and processing, the future of animal breeding, nutrition and animal health, survival of the fittest, new technologies, working together, the 10 best ways to maximize profit, and animal management and welfare.

Agri-News briefs

Accessing opportunity with barley and oat growers

The Western Barley Growers Association's 17th annual convention is about accessing opportunity. The convention February 16 through 18 at the Banff Park Lodge is being held in conjunction with the Oat Producers Association of Alberta. Among the convention topics are marketing, transportation and malting. Sessions will also cover everything you wanted to know about oats, tax management and reform, new barley and oat varieties and a panel on the charter challenge. An associated trade show is also part of the convention. Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister, is scheduled to speak on February 18. Banquet speaker is Vancouver humourist, Bob Robertson, co-star of CBC's Double Exposure radio program. For more information, contact Kathy Copper in Calgary at (403)291-3630.

33 cent breakfasts at Valleyview and Falher

For 33 cents you can have breakfast and also hear a speaker discuss family communication February 9 in Valleyview and February 10 in Falher. The 33 cents represents how much a farmer makes from a plate of breakfast food. The speaker is Gordon Colledge, family support co-ordinator at Lethbridge Community College. Colledge is well-known for his humor and practical approach to family communication. In Valleyview he'll talk about working with people you love. His subject in Falher is smelling the smoke of burnout. Each day's program starts at 7 a.m. and runs to 10 a.m. Some proceeds from the events will go to the Valleyview and District 4-H Council and the Smoky River Youth Group. For more information, call the Alberta Agriculture district office in Valleyview at 524-3301 or Falher at 837-2211.

Panford back at Brooks

Alberta Agriculture food scientist Janet Panford is back at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center. She returned to Brooks after spending a year at the Alberta Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc. During her secondment term she worked on sensory evaluation of new food products. Panford is now continuing research work on value-added food products from Alberta fruits and vegetables as well as herbs and spices. Dr. Panford can be reached in Brooks at 362-3391 or by writing her at S.S. 4, Brooks, Alberta, T1R 1E6.

Dried flower growers seminar February 12

Anyone interested in the how-tos of growing flowers and other plants for dried arrangements can come to a seminar in Edmonton on February 12. The half-day seminar is hosted by Blooming Prairie. Owner Katie Benschop will tell growers about methods for growing flowers as well as how to bundle flowers, grain, pussywillows and other plants for sale. Registration is \$15 and includes an information package. For more information, call Blooming Prairie at 431-1451.

14th annual food industry conference February 6-7

New directions and opportunities is the theme of the 14th annual Western Canadian Economic Conference of the Food Industry. The conference is February 6 and 7 at the Marlborough Inn in Calgary. Conference topics cover three general areas. They are restraints, market opportunities and advantages, and the next step. General registration is \$175 plus GST. There are discounts for three or more people from the same organization. There's also a special registration fee for agricultural college and university students of \$20 plus GST. For more information, contact the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at 451-5959.

Coming agricultural events notice

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **March or later in 1994**? Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by February 25, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Communications Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
FAX (403)427-2861

*("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in **Agri-News**.
The next list will be **March 7, 1994**)*

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AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

FEB 22 1994

February 7, 1994

Beekeeper information meetings blanket province

Alberta beekeepers can attend one of nine information meetings about varroa mites starting February 17.

Varroa mites (*Varroa jacobsoni*) were discovered in Alberta in the fall of 1993. These mites are external parasites. If left untreated, they can destroy a colony of honey bees in three years. They can also infect colonies within 25 km.

"The meetings are designed to give beekeepers detailed information about these mites and control methods," says Kenn Tuckey, Alberta Agriculture's provincial apiculturist. Tuckey and Doug Colter, Falher based apiculturist, will conduct the meetings.

Beekeepers will also get some hands-on experience at the meetings adds Tuckey. "They'll get to try the materials used to detect and treat varroa mites."

If time permits, beekeepers will be able to discuss other topics of interest.

All the information meetings, except Edmonton's, start at 7 p.m. The Edmonton meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

Information meetings are the following dates and locations: Edmonton, North West Utilities Building, 10540-132 Street, February 17; Westlock, Provincial Building conference room, March 8; St. Paul, Provincial Building, main floor conference room, March 9; Calgary, Shaganappi Library, 34 Street and 8 Ave. S.W., March 14; Peace River, Provincial Building conference room, March 14; Brooks, Provincial Building conference room, March 15; Fort Macleod, Scarlet and Gold Restaurant meeting room, March 16; Grande Prairie, Provincial Building, large conference room, March 16; and, Red Deer, Provincial Building conference room (use south entrance), March 17.

Contact: Kenn Tuckey
422-1789

Doug Colter
837-2211

National ag computer network growing rapidly

More and more farmers across Canada are using a computer network to get and exchange information.

They're using the Farm Business Management Information Network (FBMInet). It links 10 computer bulletin board systems across the country. Farmers and others dial into their province's bulletin board to access the network.

Two Alberta Agriculture computer specialists came up with the idea for a national network based on the success of the provincial network, Compu-Farm. Compu-farm started up in 1984. It had 800 users. About half were from Alberta, one-quarter from the rest of Canada, about 20 per cent from the U.S. and five per cent from around the globe.

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Special Feature: Plebiscite perspectives

Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Bruce Waldie and David Thacker, of the farm business management branch in Olds, pitched their idea to the Canadian Farm Business Management Council. The council provided funding. Then, last spring the Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario bulletin board systems were linked to test the network. The other seven nodes, parts of the network, were brought online over the summer.

Since FBMInet started, it's had over 23,000 calls from over 2,200 users. The last month of 1993 was its busiest when calls went up by one-third.

"FBMInet had tremendous growth in December," says Thacker the network's national co-ordinator. "We had over 5,300 calls and over 600 new users."

Thacker says the ways farmers are using the network are changing. Many are still getting familiar with basics such as signing on and exploring the information sources. Others have used the system's tools to get specific information more efficiently. Most are interested in the network's public message areas called echoes.

"We're seeing a steady rise in the use of the echoes," says Thacker.

Echo message areas are shared by all the bulletin board systems in FBMInet. For example, a message entered in the "farm finance" echo on New Brunswick's bulletin board shows up on the other nine systems overnight.

"Echoes are a way to share tips or participate in discussions with farmers, extension personnel and researchers across the country," he adds.

Agriculture news, market reports and special crop prices are posted daily. Two echoes, one in English and one in French, were added strictly to discuss GATT and its impact on Canadian agriculture.

"New echoes will be added very soon," notes Thacker. "The Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the Canadian Dairy Extension Council are two organizations that plan to sponsor echoes."

Farm management computer software is another popular item on FBMInet. Farmers can download the programs to their own computers. Recently, Manitoba's agriculture department put over 20 farm management programs on the network. They include a beef efficiency analyzer, grain volume calculator, crop planning budget sheets and monthly cash flow worksheets.

"With so much information available, FBMInet can seem overwhelming, but there are guides to help users use the system," says Thacker. All the help materials are available from the provincial systems operator, or sysop. [See separate story in this issue on the guides to using FBMInet.]

In Alberta, contact Bruce Waldie at the farm business management branch in Olds at (403)556-4243 for more information on the Compu-Farm bulletin board and FBMInet.

For more information on the national network, contact Thacker in Red Deer at 340-3822.

<i>Contact:</i>	<i>David Thacker</i>	<i>Bruce Waldie</i>
	<i>340-3822</i>	<i>556-4243</i>

Guides take users through FBMInet

With more than 2,000 users, daily information updates, farm management software programs, electronic mail and databases the Farm Business Management Information Network (FBMInet) can both sound and look intimidating to some computer users.

FBMInet links 10 provincial computer bulletin board systems across Canada. It's recorded over 23,000 calls since last spring. The more than 2,220 current users have their choice of five different services. This includes a public message board, databases, software sharing and electronic mail.

"Because the network isn't a year old yet and because more and more farmers are starting to use computers, many of FBMInet's users are just getting familiar with how to sign on and access its information sources," says David Thacker, the network's national co-ordinator.

"There is help for both new and experienced computer users and computer network users," adds Bruce Waldie, who founded FBMInet with Thacker. Waldie and Alberta's Compu-Farm bulletin board are based in Olds.

The help comes in three forms. A quick access guide, a comprehensive FBMInet User Guide and an FBMInet starter kit. All three are available from each province's system operator (sysop). In Alberta, that means contacting Waldie at 556-4243 at the farm business management branch in Olds.

The two-page Quick Access guide tells how to sign-on and access the different material on the bulletin board in each province. The FBMInet User Guide is a detailed, 110-page reference and tutorial guide to all FBMInet features. The starter kit includes disks with shareware programs to access the computer bulletin board system, a communications program, compression software, a text editor and an offline mail reader.

Some of the help materials can be downloaded from FBMInet. All the software in the starter kit is available on each FBMInet bulletin board. The user guide can be downloaded or can be used as an online reference manual.

<i>Contact:</i>	<i>Bruce Waldie</i>	<i>David Thacker</i>
	<i>556-4243</i>	<i>340-3822</i>

10,000 callers connect with Alberta bulletin board

Dana Brown was interested in the Friday close of the futures market when he made his second call to FBMinet, but he got more than the market up-date.

Brown, who farms with his father west of Stavely, was the 10,000th caller to Alberta's link in the national agricultural computer bulletin board, FBMinet.

Bruce Waldie, Alberta's system operator (sysop) and one the networker's founders, started a count on March 1, 1993 when the first three provincial nodes were linked. Brown's call was his second to FBMinet and the 10,000th overall.

The network provides a number of services for its users, from a variety of farm management computer software to the public message areas, or echoes.

It was the market echo that Brown tapped into to. A computer user throughout university, Brown uses computer livestock and crop management software. He heard about FBMinet while taking a course through the Claresholm Alberta Agriculture district office.

After purchasing a new modem, he became an FBMinet user. His main interest was looking at market futures. But his prize for being the 10,000th caller will help him use the network more efficiently.

The prize is a registered copy of a mail reader program that saves its users long distance line charges.

"One of the expenses computer bulletin board users have is the cost of telephone long distance charges when they connect with the system. With the mail reader, they can download what they want to their own computer. This saves line charges because they read the information off-line on their own system instead of when they're connected to the network," explains Waldie.

For more information on FBMinet in Alberta, contact Waldie in Olds at 556-4243.

Contact: Bruce Waldie
556-4243

Retirement planning latest home study package

Farm couples who plan to retire in the next five to 20 years can use a new Alberta Agriculture home study to help them reach their retirement goals.

"Retirement Files covers how-to define your retirement lifestyle, examine your financial situation and plan your future," says Faye Douglas Phillips, home study co-ordinator.

The series was designed to help people plan the resources they will need for retirement. A variety of activities in the self-study series help individuals or couples make an action plan to achieve retirement goals.

"One major benefit of the retirement package is the opportunity for participants to share their goals with other family members as they plan for the future," adds Douglas Phillips.

Like all Alberta Agriculture home study courses, Retirement Files is designed for participants to work through at their own pace in their own homes.

The retirement course was jointly developed by Alberta Agriculture's home study program and home economics and 4-H branch with financial support from the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative program.

Retirement Files costs \$15 plus GST. Orders from outside Alberta require an additional \$3 handling fee. The package is available by writing and making cheques payable to Rural Education and Development Association (REDA), 14815-119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9.

Application forms are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices or the home study program in Edmonton by calling 427-2404.

Contact: Faye Douglas Phillips Jean Wilson
427-2404 427-2412

Questions and answers about farm debt

If you've wondered what you should know about the legal implications of farm debt before you get or give a loan, you can find answers to common questions in a new Alberta Agriculture factsheet.

"Questions and answers about farm debt" (Agdex 817-14) covers a range of farm debt questions from the tax implications of debt forgiveness to security agreements on farm machinery.

"Some of the key areas are land mortgages, asset seizure, deficiencies, bankruptcy and implications of farm debt on spouses," says Paul Gervais of the farm business management branch in Olds.

For example, can a creditor foreclose on or seize everything you own; what does it mean when a lender holds duplicate certificate of title; what you can do if you sell land to a neighbor and the payments aren't made; and, can your spouse mortgage the farm without your knowledge.

"The factsheet isn't intended to replace legal advice," he adds, "But it does provide some insight into some of the questions farmers and their spouses should be asking before they sign on the dotted line."

The factsheet is available from the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office by writing 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or from your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

For more information, call Gervais in Olds at 556-4240 or write him at 201, 5030-50 Street, Olds, Alberta, T4H 1S1.

Contact: Paul Gervais
556-4250

Agri-News briefs

Pruning courses coming in March

Two pruning courses will be held in early March, one at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton and the other at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. The course in Edmonton is March 1 and 2. If there is demand, then a second course will follow on March 3 and 4. The Brooks course is March 2 and 3. Pre-registration is required and there is no registration at the door. There's also a limit of 30 participants. Participants must bring their own small pruning tools such as secateurs and lopping shears for the second day of the course. For more information on registering for the Edmonton course, contact Michele Danish at 422-1789. For more information on the Brooks course, call Hannah Mathers at 362-3391.

43rd Annual Alberta poultry industry conference

The 43rd annual Alberta Poultry Industry Conference will be held February 28 through March 2 in Red Deer. The conference theme is creating tomorrow in the poultry industry. Among the organizations who will hold business meetings during the conference are the Alberta Poultry Hatchery Association, the Alberta Egg Producers, the Alberta Turkey Growers Marketing Board, the Alberta Hatching Egg Board and the Alberta Chicken Producers. For more information, contact Alberta Agriculture's pork and poultry branch in Edmonton at 427-5320.

Lacombe field crop update March 9

A field crop update will be held at the Lacombe Agriculture building March 9 between 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. On the agenda are: what top barley and canola producers are doing; what's new in varieties; the County of Lacombe's pocket gopher control study; changes in weed control registrations; industry reports; and, feeding your crop with nutrients and micronutrients. The update is sponsored by the County of Lacombe's agriculture committee and the Alberta Agriculture Lacombe district office. For more information, contact Neil Miller at 782-3301 or 340-7161.

Bedding plants production course Feb.23

A bedding plants production course will be held February 23 at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. The course will interest anyone who is starting a greenhouse business as well as established growers. Centre staff will give an introduction to plant growth; describe computerized environmental controls, the economics of bedding plants production, and disease and insect control; and, discuss germination, growing mixes and fertilizer management. Registration is \$30. For more information, contact Dr. Mohyuddin Mirza at 422-1789 or fax 472-6096.

First joint convention of Canadian and U.S. canola growers

The Canola Council of Canada and the U.S. Canola Association will hold their first joint convention in St. Louis March 7 through 9. Agenda topics include NAFTA viewpoints from Canada, the U.S. and Mexico; potential market opportunities in Mexico; how canola meal has worked for Ralston-Purina; and, a visit to the Monsanto Life Sciences Centre. Registration is required by February 11. Registrations after that date have a \$25 (U.S.) late fee. For more information, contact Wendy Miller or Lauralou Cicierski with the Canola Council of Canada in Winnipeg at (204)982-2100.

4-Hers visit Moscow, Idaho

Two Alberta 4-H members went to Moscow, not the Russian capital, but south to Idaho. Rhonda Snider of Mayerthorpe and April van Tol of Fairview earned their trip at the provincial 4-H judging competition in November. They attended the Pacific Northwest Livestock Judging School held in conjunction with the Washington State University swine information day. The three-day event is sponsored by the Washington Pork Producers in co-operation with both Washington State University and the University of Idaho. The event was February 3 through 5. February 3 was the swine information day. The swine judging and evaluation conference was February 4. The final day included boar and gilt shows and sales as well as a carcass evaluations. Also making the trip were Doug Murfin, a 4-H leader from Pincher Creek, and Janet Kerr, acting 4-H regional specialist. For more information, contact Henry Wiegman in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Editor's note: Alberta's cattle producers are eligible to vote on an important plebiscite starting February 14. The following are presentations on each point of view to either continue a non-refundable checkoff from each animal sold, or to make the checkoff refundable.

Refundable check-off

A submission by the:

Western Stockgrowers' Association
Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association
and Alberta Cow/Calf Association

The strength, effectiveness and credibility of any organization is driven by the commitment and participation of its membership. Successful organizations constantly test the waters of their membership pool. They encourage, recognize and respond to the signals generated by this membership. This philosophy must be the foundation upon which the Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) builds its strategies for the future.

There are tremendous benefits to be gained from a refundable check-off:

- A refundable checkoff will **bring accountability to the decision making process**, as in membership driven organizations.
- **Partnerships with willing producers are created** to replace mandatory membership when producers are given the right to make choices.
- A refundable check-off ensures **effective decision making**—decisions must be made with wisdom against a background of knowledge. Wisdom is gained by communicating within the organization.
- A refundable check-off will **foster collaboration within the beef industry** to recognize problems and issues, and to deal with them effectively.
- **Accountability forces the organization to define its role**, and to assess that role on an ongoing basis.

If this process is not realized, then the organization becomes bureaucratic, rigid in its thinking and approach to problems and issues—hardly the type of organization producers need to help the cattle industry tackle the challenges of the future. This not only applies to the ACC, but to the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) as well. **The CCA will use results of the plebiscite vote when proceeding with their proposed national check-off.** Producers could then have two compulsory, non-refundable check-offs to pay.

Everything the ACC accomplishes now—either directly or indirectly by funding the CCA for national and international policy issues, Beef Information Centre promotion, or research groups—**can be accomplished through a refundable check-off.** Effective programs of demonstrated benefit to producers or their industry need not suffer.

Our future depends on it

by Larry Sears, Chairman
Alberta Cattle Commission

Beef cattle producers face the **challenge of effectively competing** for their desired share of domestic and international consumers' dinner plates. This raises two questions: *Can we do this as individual producers or do we need to work together to meet these challenges and opportunities? Can a voluntary funded organization be as effective in the marketplace as our more solidly funded competitors?*

From a strategic perspective, we must assess the competition in protein and beef markets—what are their strengths, their weaknesses and how can we be more effective than they are?

Looking at a supermarket meat counter, **beef's major competitors** are chicken, pork, turkey and lamb. **All are funded through a non-refundable check-off** at a higher rate per pound than beef. For example, the service charge on hogs is \$1.25 per head and \$1.00 on lambs, compared to \$1.50 on a steer. The meat counter may also contain U.S. beef, Australian beef and New Zealand beef. Beef cattle producers in these countries support marketing activities through a non-refundable check-off each time a beef animal is sold.

So, if the Alberta beef cattle industry has a refundable check-off will it be in a stronger position in the future than today? Undoubtedly, there would be **refund requests** and our industry would have **fewer funds available to carry out marketing programs**. The irony is producers who ask for a refund would still get the same benefits as those who put their check-off money to work for the whole industry's benefit. As well, roughly 50 cattle feeders market 45 per cent of the cattle in Alberta (1991). As margin operators, the feedlot sector may be particularly susceptible to a competitor who decides to request a check-off refund.

Industry programs funded through the check-off deliver **benefits to all producers** through lower costs of production, improved market opportunities or higher prices. All of us know there's a growing **need to address other issues** that confront our industry and threaten to effect the consumption of beef. Many well-funded **environment and animal rights** groups have suggested our industry has an adverse impact on the world: that our production practices are cruel, that beef is contaminated with hormones and antibiotics, that cattle consume grain that could feed starving people, that cattle drink too much water, that cattle production causes deforestation and that meat is murder. **Our industry can fight these issues only if we can buy the ammunition to do the job.** If only some of the industry contributes, we will be less effective.

The Alberta Cattle Commission was established nearly 25 years ago to generate enough funds to build a strong, national voice for beef cattle producers. Since then, **cattle producers have directed the Commission to take action on promotion, public and government affairs issues, and marketing challenges.** At first the ACC was appointed industry representatives. They were

Cont'd over

Cont'd over

Our future depends on it (cont'd)

replaced by direct democratic elections by cattle producers. At least 45 of the 90 delegates are elected annually for a two year term of office. Delegates can't serve for more than six consecutive years. While democracy may have its weaknesses, it's a far better than any other second-choice system.

Without secure funding, Alberta cattle producers wouldn't have been able to achieve the same results from the Beef Information Centre's recent Olympic advertising campaign. The Alberta Cattle Commission contributed an extra \$500,000 to the project capitalizing on **Mark Tewksbury's** terrific story of beef's role in his gold medal performance. Our **beef promotion and marketing programs demonstrated direct benefits to all producers** by delivering better prices and market opportunities. University of Guelph research shows **every dollar** spent on beef promotion **returns at least \$5 to the producer**. This is consistent with the U.S. program which has a much larger budget.

Similarly, our growth as a major international trader in the past five years needed funding to retain the necessary expertise to protect our industry from actions taken by other countries. We have been called upon to **defend** the industry from subsidized imports of **European beef**, respond to **trade investigations by the U.S. government** and lobby for restrictions on manufacturing beef imports to protect access to the American market. Producers have saved over **\$50 million a year** alone in lost returns from the countervail against highly subsidized European beef exports. That's **\$350 million in additional returns** since countervail was introduced in 1986.

If one considers Alberta's share of the national industry, Alberta producers have recovered **four times more value** from this one achievement than all the check-off paid during the 24 years the ACC has operated.

Philosophically, it's nice to think our industry would be stronger with a refundable check-off. However, there **isn't a single example of a voluntary check-off fee in the global meat industry**. American cattlemen support a mandatory non-refundable check-off of about \$1.30 (Cnd) and are examining the need to increase their funding. Australia's non-refundable check-off is \$3.60 (Cdn) per head marketed and New Zealand's is \$3.10 (Cdn).

Some say B.C. has a refundable check-off system that would work here. But, the B.C. Cattlemen's Association recently passed resolution favoring a non-refundable check-off. Their check-off is already \$2 per head in part because their **refund rates runs as high as a 13 per cent**. Approval was give to raise rates to \$2.50 to cover their provincial programs and national commitments. Ontario has a refundable check-off system.. **A refund rate of 19 to 21 per cent** for four consecutive years reduced their effectiveness and producers there voted to change to a non-refundable check-off. Saskatchewan and Manitoba have refundable check-offs and also have experienced difficulties in meeting their national commitments. Now Saskatchewan is moving towards a higher per head check-off.

If Alberta experiences similar refund rates to Ontario, **it could take up \$1 million from ACC program budgets**. Where would we want to cut that funding—beef promotion, market development, research, public relations, government lobbying? Or, should the check-off be increased to make up for those who request refunds?

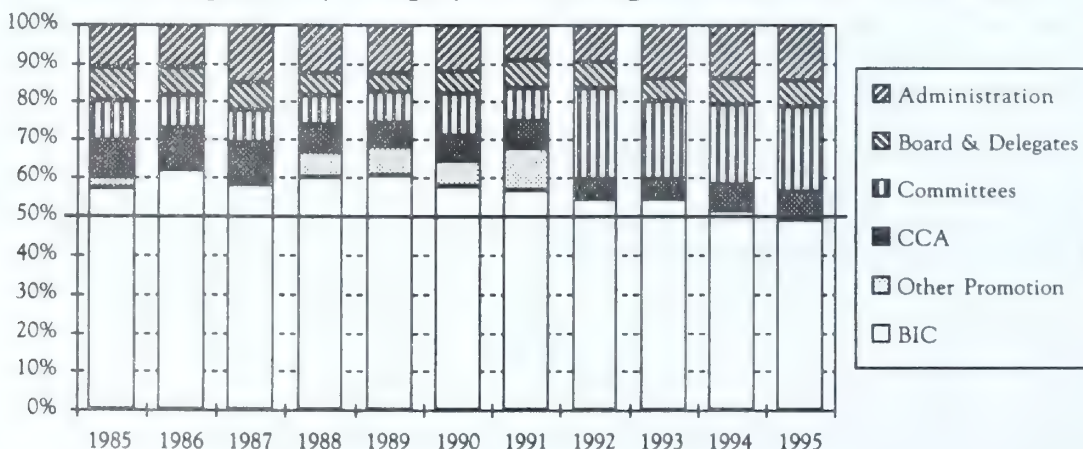
I believe the **fairest system** for all cattle producers is the **current non-refundable check-off**. Each producer pays in proportion to the **benefits** received from the Alberta Cattle Commission's **promotion, market development, research, public affairs, government affairs and national lobbying activities**. The benefits from the check-off are documented to be returned many times over through either better market access or higher prices. It's well worth supporting—our future depends on it!

Refundable check-off (cont'd)

What will be pruned if the high costs of doing the ACC's business. The following chart shows the percentage of expenditure by category. Note that the percentage spent on promotion and CCA has been dropping while ACC administration, board and delegates, and committee costs have grown substantially.

A decline in check-off revenues is a definite signal to the ACC that its programs and policies are not meeting producer needs. That's a **small price to pay for our organization to become industry-driven and much more responsive, effective and credible**.

ACC Expenses by Category as Percentage of Total — 1985 to 1995



Source: ACC as provided to producers in newsletter; 1994 & 1995 – budgeted amounts

AGRI-NEWS

February 14, 1994

Strong agri-food exports expected to continue in 1994

While Alberta's 1993 agri-food exports will be down slightly from 1992's record levels, the total is still expected to be the second best performance ever and prospects are good for a strong 1994.

"The preliminary 1993 figures are down about 12 per cent from 1992's \$3.1 billion, mostly because of sharply reduced wheat shipments to countries formerly part of the Soviet Union," says Michael Adam, Alberta Agriculture trade statistician.

"A strong 1994 is anticipated for most commodities," he adds. "In particular, exports of processed products such as meats, oilseed products, and fruit and vegetable products should be substantial."

Live cattle exports, particularly to the U.S., should continue its strong trend with favorable market conditions. These exports have risen sharply in recent years.

Adam expects 1994 exports should easily surpass 1993 levels. As well, exports to Alberta's major foreign markets – the U.S. and Japan – should approach all time highs.

"Both the GATT agreement – it takes effect on July 1, 1995 – and North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) should improve the agricultural trade climate," Adam says.

"The Canada-U.S. agreement generated a lot of export activity. There's a real potential for improved agri-food exports to Mexico and expanding Third World economies from the newer trade agreements.

"Since Alberta produces a lot more than it can consume, the importance of external markets to this province's economy can't be overstated," he adds.

In the last five years Alberta's primary farm production averaged about \$4.64 billion. Just over 40 per cent of that production is exported to other countries.

Manufactured foods and beverages averaged just higher than primary at \$4.74 billion over the last five years. About 14 per cent of these processed Alberta foods and beverages were exported.

Contact: Michael Adam
427-4011

Grades in on new beef grading system

The new beef grading system hasn't noticeably changed the way cattle are marketed in Canada says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Introduced in April 1992 the new system combines meat yields and marbling levels.

"Yield grades are working out very similar to the splits seen in the old system. Marbling grades, with some notable exceptions, are mostly ignored," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

Last year, 1993, was the first complete calendar year of the new system. The most common combined grade nationally was A1

Cont'd on page2

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

1993 Beef Grading Statistics		
Total of A Kill	Canada Percentage	Alberta Percentage
A1	67.6	65.4
A2	26.9	28.5
AA	42.9	46.2
AAA	19.8	24.3

yield and single A, the lowest level of marbling. This was 29.5 per cent of the A slaughter. The Alberta grade was slightly different. Thirty per cent of the Alberta A grade slaughter was A1 yield with a AA, or intermediate, marbling level.

"Retailer demand could make a difference," notes Gietz. "Some retailers are adopting a triple A product line and there may come a time when higher prices are required to attract cattle grading AAA marbling.

"Alternatively, retail emphasis on tenderness could result in single A marbling grade cattle being discounted," he adds.

To date, there have been adequate supplies of AAA product in the typical mix of fed cattle to meet market demand. "That's even with significant numbers of AAA-type carcasses and live cattle exported to the U.S.," he notes.

Yield grades are calculated from loin-eye area and fat thickness. The top yield is A1. There are also A2 and A3 yield grades at the A level.

Marbling is rated as A for trace, AA for slight and AAA for small. The A rating is the leanest.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Agrologists and food scientists meet for joint conference

Environmental and sustainability issues in the agriculture and food industry are the theme of a joint conference bringing together Alberta agrologists and food scientists.

The first joint conference of the Alberta Institute of Agrologists (AIA) and the Alberta chapter of the Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology is March 24 through 26 in Edmonton.

"Diversification, further processing, market development and greater self-sufficiency are all part of the new reality in our agriculture and food industry," says Ron Weisenburger, AIA president. "At the same time there is a heightened environmental consciousness not only in the public, but also with producers, processors, wholesalers and retailers."

Everyone involved in the agriculture and food industry is invited to attend the conference notes Weisenburger. "This is not a members only event," he adds.

The conference features both nationally and internationally known speakers. They include: Bob Church, farmer, Canadian

Agriculture Hall of Fame member and University of Calgary medical research associate dean; Lynn Arling, past president of the Canadian Consumers' Association of Canada (Alberta); Ross Green, Kraft General Foods quality assurance and industrial relations corporate director; and, Larry Martin, professor of agriculture policy and research at the George Morris Centre.

Environmental and sustainable challenges are highlighted in the conference opening. Presentations and discussions about primary production, the processing industry, wholesale/retailer challenges and consumer concerns perspectives start off March 25.

Luncheon speaker is Judy Schultz of the Edmonton Journal. Schultz won an Asia Pacific Fellowship for journalists. She'll describe her project, an observation of the changing food system in China as it progresses from a rural to urban economy.

The afternoon features a presentation on competitiveness and sustainability by Martin. He is followed by concurrent sessions on media relations, precision farming, value-added food processing, biotechnology and public perceptions of the agri-food industry.

There's another first at the conference, a technical poster session. Agri-food companies, individuals, organizations, public agencies and universities are invited to contribute posters. University students are also invited to take part. The entry deadline is March 15. For more information, contact Randy Shopik at 425-0636.

Poster presenters will be available for discussion on March 24 during an opening wine and cheese reception. The posters will also be on display all day March 25.

March 24 also includes a training session for articling agrologists. The AIA council will hold its meeting during the day.

An accompanying persons' program is available. The AIA will hold its annual general meeting on March 26.

For conference registration information, call Brighid McGarry at 479-1110.

Contact: Ron Weisenburger 427-2417 James Stevens 444-8771

Farm consultants go back to school

A string of -30° January days doesn't usually make people think about saskatoon berries, but 17 Alberta farm management consultants thought a lot about saskatoon jam during a four-day strategic management workshop last month.

"The consultants were going back to school," says workshop organizer Doug Barlund, a farm management economist at Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

"They studied business analysis from the long-term business direction, or through strategic planning. To aid in the learning they had a real company as their case study, Pearson's Berry Farm of Bowden," he adds.

In particular, the workshop was geared to help consultants with a new style of analysis, a marketing-based approach rather than the traditional production-based method. Most participants were Alberta Agriculture Farm Financial Advisory Service consultants. The program offers farm managers an opportunity to work with other farmers with specialized financial training skills.

"Strategic management is all about developing and achieving company objectives in a constantly changing and competitive environment," says Barlund. "This ever-changing environment presents opportunities as well as problems.

"Farm managers are no different than other business managers who rarely have enough time to spend analyzing business direction and achievements. Nor, do farmers look at businesses with any greater objectivity than anyone else."

Whether farmer or farm consultant, learning a new process or way of doing things isn't easy stresses Barlund. "Learning a new method of business analysis means unlearning what you've done before and using a new way and new perspective. Both sides, farmers and trainers see the benefits of strategic long-term planning. Both are also still learning.

"This workshop," he adds, "was another addition to farm consultants' bags of skills."

Dennis Lomore, manager of strategic planning with the Federal Business Development Bank in Calgary, was the workshop facilitator. Participants analyzed the saskatoon jam business by working through a series of worksheets. They had to answer specific, detailed questions designed to thoroughly examine the business' strength and position in the marketplace.

The starting point was a preliminary assessment of the business. Current financial statements gave a first-hand look at financial strength as well as revenues and expenses.

"At this point, we examined potential opportunities and problems expected in the next few years," says Barlund.

If the business owner is committed to serious analysis and believes in change, the next step is examining products, services and markets. Each product, if there's more than one, with a distinct market is analyzed to see how much it contributes as a percentage of total business sales and total net business profit.

"In a sense this strategic planning can be viewed as a 'creating tomorrow' process on an individual farm or agribusiness," says Barlund.

Workshop participants acquired a better understanding of this process by working with a real life company. Pearson's Berry Farm has many parts – from production through processing and food service – and all are affected by many market influences.

"It was a classic win-win situation as Pearson's benefitted from the many interesting and challenging questions posed by the learning consultants," notes Barlund.

"Although the exercise was not to rebuild the strategic plan of Pearson's Berry Farm, we enjoyed the process and learned much from the facilitator and consultants," says Len Pearson.

Contact: Doug Barlund
556-4245

Shifting market gears in video

Markets and crops that spelled success for agriculture in the past no longer guarantee profits.

Alberta Agriculture's Multi-Media Library has a new video that attempts to answer what's changed and why traditional crops are difficult to market. "Shifting Gears" (Agdex 812 VT) is a live recording of a recent Alberta Agriculture session featuring a high-powered panel.

"Two of the speakers are from the University of Alberta," says Ken Blackley, multi-media branch information officer. "Dr. Joe Richter is a rural economy professor and Dr. Tom Powrie is from the economics department. Also presenting their views are Morinville producer Joe St. Denis and Frank Kehoe from Alberta Agriculture's policy secretariat."

The panel deals with many topics adds Blackley. "Among other things, they discuss why hard spring wheat is no longer the backbone of prairie agriculture and look at the factors that drive agriculture today. As well, Joe St. Denis talks about how he mobilized producers to grow a new product without government help."

The video tape concludes with a number of comments made by participants who attended the session.

"Shifting Gears" may be borrowed by writing the Alberta Agriculture Multi-Media Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Ken Blackley
427-2127

Agri-News briefs

Little royal weekend at Lakeland College

A Lakeland College tradition at the Vermilion campus will continue March 18 through 20. An open house on Friday and Saturday runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Visitors can learn about the college's programs and services. Funshops, special interest mini-courses, will be held on Saturday at 11 a.m. and 1, 2 and 3 p.m. Special events on Friday are a pancake breakfast and a day long agricultural judging competition. Both Friday and Saturday have college farm and campus tours, a petting zoo and special swimming rates at the indoor pool. Saturday events include an Alumni House tea in the afternoon, music and drama entertainment, a horse show and a production of *Cruel Tears* by the college's drama club. An intercollegiate rodeo runs Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. For more information, call (403) 853-8400.

Girouxville organizing crime watch

An organization meeting for a Girouxville Rural Crime Watch Society will be held March 10 at the Girouxville Hall. For more information, contact Don Ouellette at 323-4378, Denis Boisvert at 323-4220 or Jacques St. Arnaud at 837-2333.

Report looks at organic materials in reclamation

A new literature review from the Reclamation Research Technical Advisory Committee looks at organic materials as soil amendments in reclamation. The report, number 93-4, gathers together to examine the effect of various organic materials when they are used as amendments to disturbed soils. Among the organic amendments reviewed were: manures, crop residue, peat, wood waste, sewage sludge, municipal yard waste, humates, vermicomposts and spent mushroom composts. Their effects on soil chemistry, physical properties and biology are all examined. Benefits and drawbacks of each organic material are discussed. The report is available for \$10.70 from Queen's Printers, Publication Services, 11510 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2Y5. For more information, contact Chris Powter at 422-2612.

Alfalfa seed school in Fairview

An Alfalfa seed school will be held at Fairview College March 17 and 18. The sponsor is the Peace Branch of the Alberta Alfalfa Seed Producers Association. For more information, contact Dave Spencer in Peace River at 624-6205 or fax 624-6209.

Bio-Oils symposium March 2 and 3

The Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission is hosting a bio-oils symposium in Saskatoon March 2 and 3. Symposium topics cover the potential of the bio-oil industry including current industrial activities, physical properties of bio-oils, the users' perspective and bio-oil opportunities. Speakers include: Werner Korbitz, a bio-diesel consultant from Austria; Steve Howell, a Kansas-based consultant; Torbjorn Widerant from Bionofilium in Sweden; Kenlon Johannes, from the Soyadiesel Development Board in Missouri; Madan Goyal from Deere Power Systems in Iowa; John Roberts who runs buses on diesel in South Dakota; Robert Jokai of FREIC that uses bio-oils in forestry; and, Arboken's Al Wong from Vancouver, B.C. Registration brochures are available from the commission's office in Saskatoon at (306) 975-0262.

Nominations open for SPCA awards

The Alberta SPCA is now accepting nominations for the farmer and veterinarian of the year. Nominations, on official nomination forms, must be received by March 15, 1994. The awards will be presented in May. The SPCA wants to recognize farmers who use husbandry methods that take into account their animals' psychological as well as physical well-being. The veterinarian of the year uses their professional expertise to improve the lot of all animals, not just those belonging to their clients. The SPCA also recognizes a teacher of the year and presents the Zeke Young Memorial Award for an individual who has made an outstanding, long-term commitment to animal welfare in Alberta. For more information, contact the Alberta SPCA in Edmonton at 471-2020.

Early bird discount on environmental audit course

The University of Alberta's extension faculty is offering a new course on environmental audits. The one-day course is March 18. There's an early bird registration special of \$195 before March 1. After that date registration is \$225. An environmental audit is a self-monitored program to evaluate the environmental status of an organization's facilities or operations. In the one-day seminar participants learn the value of environmental audits from professionals who developed the concept and/or manage their implementation and use. The course covers: how to determine your needs, how to arrange an audit, what will be audited and how to evaluate the effectiveness of a completed audit. The fundamentals of environmental auditing also apply to safety, health and product safety auditing. To register by phone using a credit card, call (403)492-3035. For more information, contact Michael Splinter at 492-3029.

Alberta named to western sustainable agriculture working group

Raphaël Thierrin of Calgary was named a member of the 1994 Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group's (SAWG) steering committee. Thierrin, a member of the Alberta Sustainable Agriculture Association, represents the marketing task force. The task forces will promote policies and programs that support sustainable agriculture and family farming operations in the Western U.S. and Canada. The appointment was made at the Western SAWG's first regional meeting in Reno. There are also Northeast, Midwest and South working groups. For more information, contact Thierrin in Calgary at 686-3310.

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AGRI-NEWS

February 21, 1994

CANADIANA

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Managing Agriculture for Profit Conference a success

The Managing Agriculture for Profit conference (MAP '94) is being termed a big success by both participants and organizers.

The three-day event, that took place in Red Deer on Feb. 1, 2 and 3, featured 31 speakers and several social activities. It was co-hosted by Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's home economics and 4-H, and farm business management branches.

"The conference was just excellent — with near capacity attendance and a high satisfaction level expressed by those attending," said Alan Ford, conference chair.

Paid attendance at MAP '94 was 426 people on day one, 450 on day two and 375 on day three. In addition, upwards of 40 conference workers and speakers were also on hand.

Ford noted that the conference was all but full because the facilities were able to handle a maximum of 500 participants.

Two-thirds of the participants filled out an extensive evaluation form and received a conference t-shirt for their efforts.

"The conference evaluations were especially gratifying to the members of the organizing committee," said Ford. "It made all the work worthwhile."

The evaluations showed 90 per cent of respondents thought the conference met or exceeded their expectations and was good value for the money and time invested. Results also indicated 98 per cent would attend MAP again.

Ford was also pleased to note the profile of the average MAP '94 participant. Approximately two-thirds were crop producers with the remainder being in the livestock business. More than half the participants were between 36 to 50 years of age, with another one-fifth being less than 36 years of age.

"These people are the future of the industry," said Ford.

"We are pleased they took the time out from their busy schedules to attend."

Ford added that the conference speakers have to be given a good amount of the credit for the success of the event. Generally, the speakers received high ratings from the participants.

"Keynote speaker Brian Chamberlin was an attraction and provided a thought provoking message on the elimination of

subsidies in New Zealand," said Ford. "He was also reassuring in that he told us the road we are on, cutbacks and the elimination of subsidies, can be negotiated successfully as others have gone before us."

Ford was quick to mention the other speakers.

"The market outlook presentations by Anne Dunford and Errol Anderson, the communications on the farm talk by Gordon Colledge and Larry Ruud's marketplace address were also identified as informative and applicable," said Ford.

Contact: Alan Ford
421-8911, ext. 1720 or 679-1720

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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Agriculture Week at West Edmonton Mall

Urban Alberta will get a chance to meet agriculture in phase one of West Edmonton Mall from March 10 through 12.

To help celebrate Agriculture Week in Alberta—March 6 through 12—three municipalities and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development have joined forces to bring agriculture to the city. For the third consecutive year the counties of Lamont, Minburn and Two Hills are working to make agriculture more visible in Edmonton.

"We hope we can give urban Albertans some insight into one of the province's leading industries through displays and several fun activities," said David Wong, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lamont and one of the event organizers.

A media celebrity cow milking contest will signal the start of the activities. It will get underway at 11:30 a.m. on March 10.

"Media people like Graham Hicks of the Edmonton Sun will demonstrate their skills at milking a cow," said Wong with a chuckle.

Following the milking contest, members of the media will attend the Alberta Made Media Luncheon, sponsored by the Alberta Food Processors Association.

"Information on agriculture and its importance to this province's economy will be available to the media at the luncheon," added Wong.

Other activities will include livestock demonstrations on March 11 and 12. The demonstrations will feature sheep shearing, horses and llamas.

Upwards of 30 displays from a wide spectrum of the agriculture and food industry will also be on display throughout the three days.

"We hope thousands of Edmontonians make a special visit to the mall to take in the displays, demonstrations and cow milking contest," said Wong.

Contact: David Wong
895-2219

RCMP livestock investigator selected

To maintain a successful cattle industry in Alberta, the province's RCMP livestock investigator position will be re-established by the Government of Alberta and the RCMP says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister.

The position was reinstated following a study on the matter conducted by the Solicitor General, the RCMP, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and the Alberta Cattle Commission. The study indicated the position, which investigates reports of stolen or missing cattle, is required because of the high volume of movement of cattle within the province.

"The cattle industry plays a vital role in Alberta's economy," stated Paszkowski. "For that reason, when the study demonstrated the necessity of the position, the department of agriculture committed to contracting the services of a livestock investigator from the RCMP."

"The department of agriculture has long shared the cattle industry's concern over the reduction of livestock investigators from the RCMP's strength, and we have supported industry's call to reinstate livestock investigators," explained Paszkowski. "This is a program that we feel strongly about and have therefore worked to reinstate."

RCMP Corporal Emil Smetaniuk will provide livestock investigation services to Alberta's cattle producers who report stolen or missing cattle. Corporal Smetaniuk has served 27 years with the RCMP, as well as three years as a livestock investigator in Red Deer and Lethbridge. He will work closely with the livestock marketing services branch of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and other commodity organizations throughout the province. He will also support the province's thriving Rural Crime Watch Program.

"Alberta's brand inspection program is known to be one of the finest in North America," stated Paszkowski. "Corporal Smetaniuk will rely heavily on our brand inspectors' support to help him investigate cattle thefts and bring cattle rustlers to justice."

"With the new inspector in place, Alberta cattle producers will feel more confident about reporting missing or stolen cattle," said Paszkowski. "With such specialized expertise in place, they will know that they will be able to deal with an individual who understands the cattle business."

During the first three quarters of 1993, Alberta accounted for 64 per cent of Canada's total fed cattle production. That figure indicates an increase of 44 percent since 1986. Alberta also accounted for 55 per cent of the total Canadian cattle slaughter last year.

A total of 4.159 million head of cattle were inspected by Alberta cattle inspectors in 1993. Of that total, over 1,500 cattle were reported missing or stolen which equates to a loss of \$1.5 million to Alberta cattle producers. In 1992, a total of 12,524 cattle were held by inspectors and returned to their rightful owners.

The livestock investigation office will be located in the Stockmen's Centre in Calgary and will open April 1, 1994.

Contact: Cliff Munroe C.D. Radke
427-4241 427-2145

or Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus
427-2137

Western Canadian Agriculture Education Council

Ag in the Classroom programs from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have joined forces with industry to form the Western Canadian Agriculture Education Council.

The non-profit organization was founded in Saskatoon on January 30 and 31, for the purpose of developing and distributing interprovincial agricultural education resources.

"The formation of the council is a real breakthrough," said Betty Gabert, a member of the founding board of directors and the co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's Ag in the Classroom program.

"Everyone involved will benefit even though the three provinces have very different programs," added Gabert.

She explained that while working together, the individual Ag in the Classroom programs will not intrude on one another's programs and projects.

Some of the attractions to being a non-profit organization include being able to access more grants and funding, and having a broader appeal to the corporate community.

"All of the Ag in the Classroom programs have something that is extremely attractive to private industry," said Gabert. "We have access to the children in the classrooms, and now we can offer a network that goes across three provinces."

The council could become even more attractive in the near future as British Columbia has been approached to join.

"I'm proud to say Alberta's Ag in the Classroom program and United Grain Growers (UGG) led the charge to form the council," Gabert said.

She noted that a year ago UGG made a three-year commitment of \$15,000 per year to Alberta's program with the condition that UGG could distribute the materials across Western Canada.

"It was then that we started talking about an interprovincial council," said Gabert.

As a result of the new council, the National Institute of Biotechnology has donated \$46,000 towards the production of a video on agri-food biotechnology.

"And we are just barely scratching the surface as far as joint marketing and resource sharing goes," said Gabert. "The opportunities are endless as private industry realizes what we have to offer."

The founding meetings in Saskatoon were co-ordinated by the Saskatchewan Ag in the Classroom program with Saskatchewan Pool and UGG acting as major partners.

Contact: **Betty Gabert**
427-2402

Seed industry partnership goes ahead

Alberta's seed growing and processing sectors have joined with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development in a unique and innovative partnership.

The seed industry partnership was signed by the Alberta branch of the Canadian Seed Growers Association (CSGA), the Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

The three-year, cost-shared agreement allows more co-ordinated and cost-effective activities. This includes new variety evaluation, plant breeding and joint ventures in the seed and grain sector.

The goal of partnership activities is to enhance seed market development and to encourage innovative processing technology.

The partnership agreement will take effect on April 1. The operational centre to co-ordinate partnership activities will be at Alberta Agriculture's Field Crop Development Centre in Lacombe.

There are about 900 Alberta CSGA members. They grow pedigreed seed on 250,000 acres each year. Alberta production represents 20 per cent of Canada's pedigreed seed.

There are 79 member seed cleaning plants in Alberta and two in B.C. in the co-operative association. They represent approximately 34,000 farmer shareholders. Their average volume of 30 million bushels represents enough seed to plant 80 per cent of total seeded acres in Alberta.

"This agreement exemplifies an excellent working relationship between government and industry," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister. "Our shared commitment to research, education and training represents a strong desire to see the seed growing and processing industries further develop and succeed in the years ahead."

"The Seed Industry Partnership represents a valuable symbiotic relationship," says Ed Lefsrud, the Alberta branch CSGA president. "We look forward to undertaking initiatives that will benefit all of the parties involved."

Keith Johnson, Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants president, says the agreement ties together efforts of all three partners. "As well, participation in joint ventures and ready access to information and expertise will allow our members to increase their awareness of industry issues and advances. This, in turn, will help them add to the efficiency of their individual operations."

Contact:	Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus	Bill Witbeck
	427-2137	782-4641
or	Ed Lefsrud	Keith Johnson
	336-2500	842-2030

Agri-News Briefs

Agrologists host Klinck lecture

The Edmonton Branch of the Alberta Institute of Agrologists is hosting a dinner and lecture at the Edmonton Inn on March 1. The event is part of the Klinck Lectures, a series of lectures being held across Canada. The guest speaker will be David MacDonald, former MP, cabinet minister, United Church minister, broadcaster, ambassador and famine relief co-ordinator. His lecture will deal with sustainability in agriculture. The event begins at 5:30 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m. and the lecture at 7:30 p.m. More information and tickets are available from Greg Malyk at 495-4488.

Saskatoon berry production seminar

The Fruit Growers Society of Alberta is hosting its 1994 Saskatoon Berry Production Seminar in Edmonton on March 25 and 26. The event will be held at the Northlands AgriCom and will feature growers, researchers, marketing specialists and plant management people as speakers. Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices or from Shirley Alton, 54053 Range Road 215, Ardrossan, Alta. T0B 0E0. For more information call 998-2782.

Edmonton Northlands 11th annual pedigreed seed show

The Edmonton Northlands 11th Annual Pedigreed Seed Show will be held at the Northlands AgriCom, March 22 to 25. A summary of entries form and crop samples must be received by March 1, 1994 to be entered. For more information contact Edmonton Northlands at 471-7260.

9th Annual Peace Country Classic Agri Show Seed Fair

The 9th Annual Peace Country Classic Agri Show Seed Fair will be held in Grande Prairie, March 10, 11 and 12. All entries must be at the seed fair office at: Evergreen Park, Box 370, Grande Prairie, Alta. T8V 3A5 by 12 noon on March 8, 1994. For more information on entry requirements phone 532-3279.

Regional swine seminars 1994

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's swine specialists, along with the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation, the University of Alberta and the Prairie Swine Centre are hosting a series of swine seminars entitled, Profiting from Research. The seminars will put producers in touch with the current swine research and how it can apply to their farm. The seminars are scheduled for March 14, Westlock and District Community Hall; March 15, Vegreville Masonic Hall; March 16, Black Knight Inn in Red Deer; and, March 17, El Rancho Motor Inn in Lethbridge. The seminars will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at all locations. Registration fees are \$25 per person, including lunch, if paid by March 9, 1994. Registration at the door will be \$30 per person. For more information call 427-5320 or contact your local regional swine specialist.

AGRI-NEWS

February 28, 1994

CANADIAN

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Home Study releases new Cowchip\$

The addition of three new modules to the Cowchip\$ computer software program for beef producers, makes the program even more valuable says Faye Douglas Phillips, Alberta Agriculture's home study co-ordinator.

The software program was designed to help beef producers identify ways to improve their cow-calf herds. Until recently, the program contained three modules: Dealing with records, troubleshooting and herd nutrition.

The three new modules are cow lifetime productivity, adding value to the calf and utilities.

"The cow lifetime productivity module combines individual cow record files from previous years," said John Basarab, beef management specialist at Alberta Agriculture's cattle and sheep branch. "It allows the producer to calculate two measures of a cow's efficiency."

"The module looks at pounds of calf weaned per year the cow is in the herd and the pounds of calf weaned per pound of estimated feed input per year the cow is in a herd," explained Basarab.

The adding value to the calf module examines the feed costs per pound of gain, total cost per pound of gain, net return and break even price.

The utilities module allows the user to quickly edit the cow records files being used.

The records module provides a format for entering information required for producers to evaluate their herd production and management. The nutrition module is a quick method for balancing or checking beef rations. The troubleshooting module examines the GOLD variables — growth, open cows, length of calving season and death loss.

Basarab noted, "In order to benefit from Cowchip\$, a producer must have the data to put into the modules."

"This includes breeding, weaning dates, weights, death losses, culling practices, vaccination and other management records."

Producers also require an IBM-PC or IBM compatible with a hard drive, 640K available internal memory of RAM and CGA graphics or better to use the program.

Cowchip\$ was developed by Alberta Agriculture's cattle and sheep branch, and home study program. It is designed to complement the Beef Herd Management Reference Binder and Study Guide.

Cowchip\$ is available at a cost of \$300 plus GST. Orders from outside Alberta require an additional handling fee of \$2. To order, send a cheque made payable to: Rural Education and Development Association (REDA), 14815 - 119 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9.

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Cowchip\$ application forms are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or the home study program in Edmonton by calling 427-2404.

Contact: Faye Douglas Phillips John Basarab
427-2404 427-5083

Government ends lamb stabilization program

Alberta has terminated the National Tripartite Stabilization Program (NTSP) for lambs, effective , says Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Walter Paszkowski.

Other participating provinces have also agreed to amend the program so they can end it prior to the original end date of February 29, 1996.

"The decision to end this commodity-specific program is in line with our goal of a whole-farm income support approach," said Paszkowski. "And the timing is right. Industry forecasts show good prospects for continued growth and reasonable returns for lamb producers."

The NTSP for lambs was introduced in 1986 to stabilize producer returns and reduce the risks associated with fluctuating prices and costs. Producer premiums were matched by the federal and provincial governments and deposited into national accounts. Payments were made to producers when cash margins fell below long-term averages.

The Government of Alberta has also brought to an end the Alberta Purchased Feeder Lamb Stabilization Program. It too, ended on . The program covered lamb feedlots, which were not included in the NTSP. It was funded by the provincial government and producers. It was originally scheduled to end on December 31, 1995.

"I'm very pleased that industry associations and producers have taken an active role in shaping their future," added Paszkowski.

The Canadian Sheep Federation passed a resolution at its last annual meeting to recommend ending the NTSP for lambs. The Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission was also consulted and supported the termination of the programs.

Producers enrolled in the two programs will receive further information in the mail. They will also be notified when producer groups and government come up with a transition program until a whole-farm approach can be implemented.

Contact: Dwight Diben/ Brian Hlus Ray Bassett
427-2137 427-1957

or

Ken Moholityn at 422-9167

March is Nutrition Month

March is Nutrition Month across Canada and this year's campaign focuses on healthy eating for children says Aileen Whitmore, Alberta Agriculture's provincial foods and nutrition specialist.

This year's campaign is titled, *Nourishing Our Children's Future*, and offers the opportunity to shine the spotlight on some key nutrition issues affecting children.

Whitmore says that there are several key issues when you talk about children and nutrition.

"Starting off the day with a good breakfast, eating a balanced diet with an emphasis on the right foods and understanding fat intake are all important when it comes to children," said Whitmore.

She explained that everyone knows the importance of a good breakfast before children are sent off to school, but not all children are getting the proper food.

"Going to school hungry or undernourished can affect a child's physical and mental performance," added Whitmore.

Healthy eating also means eating a variety of foods every day. Another suggestion is of all the foods you eat, eat more grain products, vegetables and fruit than anything else. Being active, by walking, riding a bike, skating, skiing, playing basketball or taking part in other activities, should be part of everyone's daily routine. Snack foods that are high in fat and sugar can be enjoyed, but not every day. Also, people should be conscious of not taking in too much extra fat.

"The fat intake issue is an important one," said Whitmore. "Many adults are on fat reduced diets which are not ideal for children."

Whitmore noted that children need a certain amount of fat in their diet, for energy. She explained that a new publication, *Nutrition Recommendations Update... Dietary Fat and Children*, has recently been published by the Joint Working Group of the Canadian Paediatric Society and Health Canada.

The working group made the following recommendation: From the age of two until the end of linear growth, there should be a transition from the high fat diet of infancy to a diet which includes no more than 30 per cent of energy as fat and no more than 10 per cent of energy as saturated fat. During this transition, energy intake should be sufficient to achieve normal growth and development. Food patterns should emphasize variety and complex carbohydrate, and include lower fat foods. Physical activity should be stressed.

"What this means is children should be active, eat a good variety of foods and they can have butter on their toast—just not excessive amounts," said Whitmore.

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

Protective clothing and pesticides

Alberta farmers have improved their clothing habits when working with pesticides, but there is still lots of room for improvement, says Alberta Agriculture's protective clothing research associate.

"When farmers were first surveyed in 1984 about the types of clothing they wore while spraying, none were wearing disposable coveralls," said Karen Malyk. "Now, more than a third of those surveyed are using disposal coveralls and the numbers are on the rise."

While advancements are being made, a December 1993 survey shows 11 per cent of participants in the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program still suffered some poisoning symptoms.

Malyk noted that accessibility of proper protective clothing and comfort are still issues requiring more work.

"Suppliers are making accessibility to protective clothing easier for farmers and are offering discounts for anyone taking the Farmer Pesticide Certification Program," said Malyk. "Comfort also becomes an issue when it is hot, as farmers find it frustrating to have to put on more layers of clothing."

She also explained that farmers are more often using the proper hand protection, but sometimes still remove their gloves to work with small tools or clean nozzles and other pieces of equipment.

Malyk emphasized multiple layers of clothing as the key to protection while handling pesticides. "The more layers, the more protection you have," said Malyk.

Basic protective clothing includes a long-sleeved shirt, full-length trousers, coveralls, unlined nitrile gloves, neoprene overboots or long rubber boots and a wide brimmed hard hat. Extra protection includes hooded, disposable coveralls and a waterproof apron.

"While disposable coveralls provide extra protection, they do have limited use," noted Malyk. "They can be used again as long as they have only had limited chemical exposure and haven't been ripped or developed holes. They should also be replaced when they pill—balls of fibre appear on their surface. They shouldn't be laundered."

If farmers are using their coveralls more than once, they must remove them carefully so as not to contaminate their insides. As well, between wearings they should be hung in well ventilated areas, away from other clothing and people.

Malyk also reminds farmers to use the hood on the coveralls. "It is excellent protection for your head area. This area has a high pesticide absorption rate and the hood is yet another layer of protection. The coveralls also fit better when the hood is up."

Disposable coveralls shouldn't be burned. Instead, place them in a plastic bag and take them to an approved landfill site.

Malyk also advises making sure the disposable coveralls are recommended for the pesticide being used.

When farmers handle concentrated chemicals, an impermeable apron should be worn over disposable coveralls as the genital area has one of the highest absorption rates on the body. This area's absorption rate is 12 times higher than for the forearm.

Care should also be taken when handling contaminated clothing. For washing, Malyk suggests pre-soaking, then washing in hot water with a heavy duty detergent.

"It is important not to contaminate other articles of clothing in the laundry area and to thoroughly clean the washing machine after washing pesticide contaminated clothing by running a full cycle," said Malyk. "Contaminated clothing should be washed each day and should be dried on a line, not in the dryer."

Malyk also explained that the Human Ecology and Chemistry Departments at the University of Alberta are continuing research work on the decontamination of pesticide clothing and equipment.

Contact: Karen Malyk
427-2412

Farm water assistance programs completed

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's 1992 Farm Water Assistance Programs have come to a successful completion says Darcy Fitzgerald, an agrologist with the engineering services branch.

Under three programs, the Supplemental Rural Water Development Program (SRWDP), the Emergency Farm Water Supply Assistance Program (EFWSAP) and the 1992 Water Hauling Assistance Program, approximately 7,200 projects received assistance and were completed.

The SRWDP was designed to assist producers in the 1991/1992 designated drought regions in northeastern and northwestern Alberta.

"This program provided assistance for the construction of 1,900 dugouts and 1,400 wells, over a two-year period," said Fitzgerald.

"The EFWSAP provided assistance to producers who constructed 3,300 small livestock water related projects in the 1992 designated regions of northeastern and northwestern Alberta," Fitzgerald added.

The 1992 Water Hauling Assistance Program assisted 580 provincial producers who were forced to haul water due to water shortages caused by drought.

Fitzgerald noted that all the eligible applications under the three programs have been finalized. Work on the projects had to be completed by Dec. 31, 1992 and the applications had to be received by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development by March 31, 1993.

Contact: Darcy Fitzgerald
427-2181

Summer Agricultural Education Institute

For the fifth year in a row 30 Alberta school teachers will be treated to an eight-day agricultural education institute says Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program.

This year's institute will be held at Fairview College from July 10 to 18.

"The teachers attend on a limited scholarship basis which includes tuition, accommodation and meals," said Gabert.

She added, "It's total immersion as the teachers are introduced to agriculture through a trade fair put on by industry and government, panel discussions, two days of tours and an overnight stay at a local farmer's home."

Once the teachers have attended the institute they are asked to write lesson plans and resource materials for publication. The materials are compiled, reproduced and distributed through the Ag Ambassador program and its members.

Gabert describes the institute as an excellent example of government and industry working together.

Alberta Agriculture contributes a large team of resource people to work at the institute's classroom panel discussions, while United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited (UFA), the institutes major sponsor, provides financial backing.

Four colleges, Lethbridge, Olds, Lakeland and Fairview, also make major contributions by hosting the institute on a rotating basis and matching the monetary contributions of UFA.

For the past four years UFA has contributed \$15,000 per year to the project. Those funds were recently increased to \$20,000 for the next two years.

"UFA not only announced the increase to funding at the February 7 institute meeting in Lethbridge, but they also indicated they are looking at another long-term commitment to the program," added Gabert.

Gabert anticipates a cost recovery system can be established so the host college will not have to contribute any funds to the project.

"Reducing costs and becoming more efficient are really significant in these times," noted Gabert.

Contact: **Betty Gabert**
427-2402

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Agri-News Briefs

Producer meeting in Wetaskiwin

Alberta Agriculture's district offices in Wetaskiwin, Ponoka, Camrose and Leduc have joined forces to host, Crop Update: 1994 and Beyond. The producer meeting is being held on March 8 at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum in Wetaskiwin. It will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and include four speakers. The feature speaker is Dick Dawson of Fulcrum Associates in Winnipeg. He will speak on major world agricultural trends—GATT, NAFTA and the implications for central Alberta Farmers. The other speakers will be Murray Hartman, a regional crop specialist; Dr. Neil Harker, a research scientist; and, Elston Solber, a research agronomist. Over 20 exhibit booths will also be on display. Seating is limited, but can be reserved on a first come, first served basis. Contact the Alberta Agriculture district office in Wetaskiwin at 361-1240 for more information or to reserve your seat.

Grain day '94 meetings

The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) is holding Grain Day '94, a series of 24 meetings across the Prairies, to focus on the proposed new delivery policy for 1994-95. The program at these meetings will also include a review of CWB operations and a market outlook for 1994. The remaining meetings in Alberta include: March 7, Lake Saskatoon Hall; March 8, Falher, Falher Arena; March 9, Westlock, Westlock Inn; and, March 10, Vegreville, Vegreville Social Centre.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
APR 6 1994

March 7, 1994

Three-year plan charts course for change

A blueprint for the future of the province's agriculture ministry was released Feb. 24, 1994 by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Walter Paszkowski.

From 1992-93 to 1996-97, the agriculture ministry will reduce its budget by nearly \$117 million or 23.5 per cent. The Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of the agriculture and food industry to the provincial economy. Therefore, the ministry's reductions are lower than those faced by some other government ministries.

"Direction provided by stakeholders is the foundation of this three-year business plan," confirmed Paszkowski. "Through Creating Tomorrow, the province-wide consultation held in late 1992 and early 1993, and the recent public meetings leading to the final three-year business plan, industry stakeholders contributed significantly to planning the ministry's future direction."

The business plan identifies priorities and specifies resource reallocations.

Highlights of the plan are:

- Increased funding for research
- Improved one-stop service and increased access to specialists for clients
- Reduced farm input subsidies
 - reduction in the Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance
 - termination of the Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program
- Funds shifted from commodity-specific safety-net programs to a whole farm income support approach
- Fees and charges implemented for certain products and services
- Reduced public investment in and increased user-contribution to irrigation rehabilitation and expansion
- Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation and Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation merger completed, and the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation created as a result, to achieve cost-savings
- Funding allotted to develop a government-industry electronic network
- Retaining current levels of funding to agricultural service boards

"Our goal is to improve service to the agriculture and food industry," explained Paszkowski. "For example, we will direct our efforts toward developing a whole-farm approach to farm safety nets and toward retraining staff to provide more specialized information to producers and processors. And by allocating \$2.6 million over three years to develop an electronic communications system, we will provide the industry with access to vital, up-to-date information that will enhance its competitiveness."

"As we implement the business plan, we will continue to seek advice and support from industry stakeholders, and to be accountable to them," stated Paszkowski.

Copies of the agriculture ministry's three-year business plan are available from the Policy Secretariat of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. The Policy Secretariat in Edmonton can be reached by calling 427-2417, or by calling the RITE operator and asking for the same number.

For more details on the business plan, please refer to the attached summary.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus C.D. Radke
427-2137 427-2145

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development: Business Plan Summary

A) Ministry Spending Profile

	Ministry Expenditures Net of Dedicated Revenue (in '000s)	% Reduction from 1992-93 Actual
1992-93 Actual	\$498,533	-
1993-94 Forecast	469,824	5.8
1994-95 Estimate	382,301	23.3
1995-96 Target	418,589	16.0
1996-97 Target	381,385	23.5

B) Department and Agency Reductions

	Expenditures Net of Dedicated Revenue (in '000s)		% Reduction from 1992-93 Actual
	1992-93 Actual	1996-97 Target	
Department	\$301,857	\$223,221	26.0
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation	186,585	149,268	20.0
Alberta Agricultural Research Institute	5,703	5,688	.3
Alberta Dairy Control Board	712	648	9.0
Farmers' Advocate	529	402	24.0
Irrigation Council	242	222	8.3
Surface Rights Board/Land Compensation Board	1,828	1,555	14.9
Agricultural Products Marketing Council	799	159	80.1
Alberta Grain Commission	<u>278</u>	<u>222</u>	<u>20.1</u>
	<u>\$498,533</u>	<u>\$381,385</u>	<u>23.5</u>

Changes consistent with industry direction

As the agriculture ministry implements its new three-year business plan, it will change the way it serves the agriculture and food industry in Alberta.

"Those changes are in harmony with direction provided by the industry," said Walter Paszkowski, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development on Feb. 25, 1994.

During Creating Tomorrow, the province-wide consultation process held in 1992 and 1993, the agriculture and food industry defined its vision of the future. In late 1993, the Standing Policy Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development hosted public consultations at which it outlined possible action plans for the agriculture ministry's three-year business plan.

"We are proud of our plan. Our focus is to serve the leading edge of industry," said Paszkowski. "Our extensive public consultations have enabled the ministry to align its priorities and goals with those of the industry. Our business plan is consistent with the direction provided by participants. We are refocusing our resources to provide better information, programs and services to meet the industry's emerging needs."

The participants strongly supported many of the actions discussed at the meetings. This encouraged the ministry to incorporate those actions into its plan. Examples consistent with industry direction in the final business plan include: providing more specialized information and services; and introducing one-stop services for agriculture; additional emphasis on research; and assuring greater industry involvement in funding and directing research; changing farm income support to focus on a whole-farm approach consistent with international trade obligations; and, reducing the Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance rebate to support the Government of Alberta's efforts to reduce the provincial deficit.

Detailed responses by the ministry to questions asked of consultation participants have been published in a report entitled "Getting Down to Business."

"While the industry will be called upon to contribute more than it has in the past, it will also have greater control over the nature and direction of programs and services provided by the ministry," Paszkowski pointed out. "We'll become even more responsive to industry's needs. That's our three-year goal."

Copies of the agriculture ministry's three-year business plan are available from the Policy Secretariat of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. Copies of "Getting Down to Business" are also available. The Policy Secretariat in Edmonton can be reached by calling 427-2417, or by calling the RITE operator and asking for that number. A business plan information line can also be reached at the same number.

Contact: *Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus* C.D. Radke
427-2137 427-2145

Irrigation issues to receive subcommittee's attention

The Government of Alberta's support of irrigation activities in Alberta will be the subject of study by a subcommittee of the Standing Policy Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, Barry McFarland, Chairman of the Standing Policy Committee, announced on Feb. 25, 1994.

The subcommittee's mandate will be to review the provincial government's role in funding irrigation infrastructure. Subcommittee members will also be asked to provide advice on how the Irrigation District Rehabilitation Endowment Fund should be concluded and how the proceeds of the fund should be dispersed. The feasibility and implications of instituting a provincial water user fee for irrigation districts will also be discussed.

The committee will hold meetings this summer with irrigation districts and water users to collect stakeholder input before submitting a final report on Sept. 1, 1994, to Brian Evans, Minister of Environmental Protection, and Walter Paszkowski, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

"As the provincial government implements its three-year business plan, we need to continue to consult with affected parties to create a new partnership for the future," said McFarland. "I hope that irrigation districts and their water users will take advantage of this opportunity to provide input to the development of a new way of doing business."

Provincially funded irrigation activities were addressed Feb. 24, 1994 when the Government of Alberta released its three-year business plan. Changes in programming offered by Alberta Environmental Protection and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development will result in a restructuring of provincial funding to irrigation districts.

"With these changes in the Government of Alberta's fiscal capacity to support irrigation rehabilitation, a redefinition of the partnership between irrigation districts and the government needs to be developed," noted McFarland.

"The Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of the province's irrigation infrastructure to the economy and well-being of Alberta," said Evans. "And we want to see those benefits sustained in the future."

"Alberta's irrigation infrastructure creates important opportunities for agricultural diversification, value-added processing and rural development, and these opportunities must be supported" said Paszkowski. "With the change in the provincial government's fiscal situation, new arrangements must be made with our partners — the irrigation districts and their water users — to ensure the viability of the irrigation systems in Alberta."

The subcommittee is comprised of the following Members of the Legislature of Alberta: Barry McFarland, MLA, Little Bow Constituency (Chairman); Jack Ady, MLA, Cardston-Chief Mountain Constituency; Glen Clegg, MLA, Dunvegan

Constituency; David Coutts, MLA, Pincher Creek, Macleod Constituency; Clint Dunford, MLA, Lethbridge West Constituency; Butch Fischer, MLA, Wainwright Constituency; Ron Hierath, MLA, Taber-Warner Constituency; and, Lyle Oberg, MLA, Bow Valley Constituency.

McFarland noted that the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association has indicated its understanding for the need to modify current arrangements and has expressed an interest in developing a proposal to assume greater responsibility for Alberta's irrigation infrastructure.

"These actions will leave agriculture in a more competitive position to meet the changing needs of the industry," he said.

Contact: Barry McFarland
427-3020

1994 Crop Protection with Chemicals book available

The 1994 edition of Crop Protection with Chemicals, the "blue book", is now for sale at district offices and the publications office in Edmonton says Alberta Agriculture's supervisor of preventative and regulatory services.

The 272 page reference book tells readers everything they need to know about applying herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and rodenticides. It also features easy-to-use selector charts for finding products to control pest problems, protective clothing recommendations, herbicide resistance information, a list of chemical container disposal sites, and first aid and emergency information.

"This edition contains over 150 changes from last year's book and all farmers who work with agricultural chemicals should have a copy," said Shafteek Ali. "The changes include all the newly registered chemicals, formulation changes, new weeds, new crop varieties and additional safety recommendations."

The book is being sold for the first time. It has a \$10 plus GST (\$10.70 total) price tag and discounts are being offered for purchases of 100 copies or more.

"It's good value for the money," emphasized Ali. "When you consider farmers spend \$10 to \$15 per acre for chemical, plus the expense of applying it, \$10 is cheap to ensure safe and accurate application."

"Using old formulation information from past editions can mean huge crop losses. If a new chemical is more concentrated, but is applied at an old rate, it could easily burn a farmer's crop," explained Ali.

He added that chemicals are being used more often and the information is becoming more complicated each year. "With chemicals it is important to work with the right information as there is no room for guessing. A mistake can mean thousands of dollars in crop losses and environmental damage."

Copies can be purchased at Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the publications office at 7000 - 113 St. Edmonton, Alta. T6H

5T6. Copies ordered through the publications office require an additional \$2 plus GST (\$2.14) to cover shipping and handling.

Contact: Shafteek Ali
427-7098

Spring run-off

One of the best ways to protect farmland from heavy spring run-offs is by using grassed waterways says an Alberta Agriculture soil and water engineer.

With the deep snow this winter and the greater possibility of heavy spring run-offs, grassed waterways should prove their value this spring.

"This type of waterway is effective under these conditions because it is so resistant to erosion," said Douwe Vanderwel.

Grassed waterways are wide, saucer shaped and not very deep. Their design spreads the water out, making it less erosive.

"Because these waterways aren't very deep, it doesn't take much of an obstruction to cause flooding," explained Vanderwel. "If flooding occurs, the water flows somewhere else and the waterway isn't able to do its job of carrying the water and preventing erosion."

This year's deep snow can also present blockage problems for these shallow waterways. It may be necessary to correct the problem by clearing snow.

"The deep snow presents another problem as it also makes it difficult to remove snow without becoming stuck. The best choice of equipment for this task is a crawler tractor (bulldozer), but a farm tractor with chains for added traction, is also a good choice," explained Vanderwel.

He suggests clearing a path to the waterway and in the same way begin clearing the waterway. Starting at the downstream end will ensure you can drive out, but starting at the upstream end will make pushing easier. In deep snow, digging and piling with a front-end loader may work better than blading and pushing.

"It isn't necessary to clear the entire width of the waterway, but at least a tractor width is recommended. Another thing to remember is to take care that you don't damage the waterway with your equipment," said Vanderwel.

Not all parts of a waterway will need clearing. Farmers should look for control points where water from a blocked waterway can easily jump or be diverted. Waterways located in poorly defined or flat landscape may be areas needing clearing. An established waterway with a well defined plough furrow along its edge is also a prime candidate for snow plowing as the water will flow along the plough furrow, causing erosion.

"If you don't like clearing snow, you can let Mother Nature help you," added Vanderwel. "Spreading dark material on the snow will help melt the snow more quickly this spring."

Some possible materials are: cinder ash from sawmills, coal dust from any place burning coal, peat soil or peat moss, and powdered charcoal briquettes or lampblack.

The darker the material the better, suggests Vanderwel. He also recommends finding a material that is readily available, easy to haul and cost efficient.

"Again, because of access problems, spreading large quantities of any material can be a problem," said Vanderwel. "Try working potential plugging hotspots first."

Contact: Douwe Vanderwel
422-4385

Mouldy peas tested

Tests indicate it is possible for mould to be present in feedstuffs without the accompanying toxin, but Alberta Agriculture's monogastric nutritionist still recommends not feeding mouldy feed to livestock.

A sample of badly moulded peas was studied at Alberta Agriculture's animal health laboratory in Edmonton to determine what mould grows on Alberta peas and what level of toxin is present.

"The sample was cultured and viewed under ultra violet (UV) light to see which mould is present and if there were signs of toxins," said Sam Jaikaran.

Examination showed several types of fungi (mould) present, with strains of *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* being quite prominent. However, when viewed under UV light the typical fluorescence of kajoic acid wasn't present, leading to the conclusion that the presence of aflatoxin was unlikely. Kajoic acid is non-toxic, but is usually produced alongside aflatoxin by *Aspergillus* mould, whenever conditions are right for toxin production during fungal growth.

"Chemical analysis, which is the conclusive test for toxin, was not done on the sample," noted Jaikaran.

He added that some species of *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* are capable of producing very powerful toxins which cause serious health problems for most types of livestock.

Toxin production occurs under very specific conditions of temperature and humidity. In Alberta, these conditions are rare.

"Although the conditions are rare, it should be understood that these strains are quite abundant in mouldy feedstuffs and under the right conditions present immense danger to livestock," emphasized Jaikaran. "All mouldy feeds should be viewed with suspicion."

Feeding mouldy feedstuffs to livestock is not recommended because of its low palatability, lower nutrient content and the ill effects toxins may present.

Contact: Sam Jaikaran
427-8906

Beat your winter blahs, plan flower beds now

Planning flower beds is a great way to break the cycle of winter blahs says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Planning now means you will have enough plants in the right places and so you can order seeds. Ordering early means you're less likely to be disappointed," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

She suggests starting with graph paper and plotting out flower beds using a scale of one square equals one square foot of garden space. Note shady and sunny spots in the diagram.

"When you've mapped out the bed locations, you can start choosing plants and placing them," she says.

Seed catalogues or a reference book on annuals tell how high plants grow and how wide they might spread. As well, information about how far to space plants will make placing them easier.

Barkley also has some general recommendations about plant placement. Foundation planting should have the tallest plants in the background, graduating down to the shortest plants in front. Island flower beds should have the tallest plants in the center with plant height dropping as you move outwards. Again, the shortest plants are in front.

"Planting annuals in groups, or drifts, is more eye-catching than if you put them singly in rows," she adds.

Another way to add eye appeal and color is by blending vegetables with flowers says Barkley. "Don't be afraid of mixing vegetable crops into your flower beds. The foliage of beets or carrots can add interest and color to a flower border."

Once plants have been chosen, use colored pencils or pens to represent plant groupings on the graph paper plan.

"From the finished plan you can compile the list of plants you will need. The list will also help with decisions about whether to start your flowers from seed, which ones to buy as transplants and which ones to direct seed," Barkley says.

Another factor to keep in mind when planning is how much time and work the flower bed will take. "Think about both preparation and maintenance," she says.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Agri-News Briefs

Farmer pesticide certificate program

The Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program is being offered in Grande Prairie on March 14 and 15. It is also available at four evening sessions, running March 14, 15, 21 and 22. The program is being held at the Provincial Building in Grande Prairie. For more information on the program or to register, call Alberta Agriculture's district office in Grande Prairie at 538-5285.

Parasitic mite meeting

Beekeepers are invited to attend a parasitic mite meeting in Grande Prairie on March 16. The meeting will be held at the Provincial Building and will run from 7-10 p.m. For more information on this meeting call Alberta Agriculture's district office in Grande Prairie at 538-5285.

Alberta foundation for animal care meeting

A meeting of the Alberta Foundation for Animal Care (AFAC) will be held in Calgary on March 16, at the Port-O-Call Inn (Red Baron Room), starting at 9:30 a.m. AFAC plans to make this an annual event. The meeting will review AFAC activities in 1993 and initiatives for 1994. In addition to foundation business, guest speaker Terry Hockaday, an agriculture communications specialist and former journalist, will address the gathering at lunch. The potential and pitfalls of communicating today will be his topic. A media workshop will also be conducted by Joanne Lemke, public affairs manager for the Alberta Cattle Commission. Anyone interested in the welfare of animals is invited to attend. For more information contact Susan Kitchen at the AFAC office in Calgary at 299-2675.

Aggie days in Calgary

The Agriculture Education Committee of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede is inviting everyone to take in Aggie Days, March 23-26, in conjunction with the annual Stampede Dairy Classic. Tours for Calgary and district students will be hosted on March 23, 24 and 25. Through a wide variety of exhibits, demonstrations and information the students will learn how agriculture affects their lives every day. The displays will feature heavy horses, blacksmithing, hay and seed information, cow milking, poultry and rabbits, sheep shearing, weaving, flour milling, egg marketing, exotic animals and beef cattle. On March 26, Aggie Days will open its doors to the general public for Family Fun Day. Everyone is invited to attend and admission is free. One of the events will be a celebrity challenge where local celebrities will be asked to perform some basic agricultural skills. The student tours run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on March 23, 24 and 25. Family Fun Day goes from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 26. For more information contact Joan Cool at the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede in Calgary at 261-9316 or toll free 1-800-661-1260.

Outlook seminars coming

Alberta farmers can learn more about marketing through seven separate seminars coming to different locations around the province during March and April. The outlook seminars are supplied by KenAgra Management Services and are partially funded through the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative. Two of the seminars are in Edmonton. The first, on March 15, is recommended for producers who don't have futures accounts. The second is more advanced and is recommended for producers with futures accounts. That seminar is April 6. Other seminars are March 17 in Red Deer, March 18 in Strathmore, March 21 in Grande Prairie (basic), March 22 in Grande Prairie (advanced) and March 29 in Lloydminster. The pre-registration fee is \$100 (plus GST), with no additional charge for a spouse. The seminars should be tax deductible for farmers. For more information, contact Cynthia Whitehead at KenAgra in Edmonton at 468-4442.

Coming agricultural events

94th annual Calgary bull sale

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede

Calgary March 6-8

Joan Cool - 261-0162 - Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Agriculture Week

Alberta March 6-12

Bard Haddrell - 427-2127 - Edmonton

Agricultural Classic

Evergreen Park

Grande Prairie March 10-12

Exhibition office - 532-3279 - Grande Prairie

Agriculture Education Network Association annual meeting and conference

Grande Prairie March 10-12

John Melicher - 451-5959 - Edmonton

R.O.P. Swine Test Station performance tested boar sales

Leduc March 12

Albert Eringoeld - 986-5179 - Leduc; Don Plain - 986-5055 -

Leduc

One day A.I. refresher

Olds College

Olds March 12

Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

A.I. Herd Improvement

Olds College

Olds, March 14-18

Extension Services 556-8344

AgVenture '94

Cypress Centre & Exhibition grounds

Medicine Hat March 17-19

Anna - 526-5214 - Medicine Hat

Environmental Audits: An Effective Part of Environmental Management

University of Alberta

Edmonton March 18

Michael Splinter - 492-3035 - Edmonton

Little Royal Open House

Lakeland College

Vermilion March 18-20

Cathy MacKenzie - 853-8544 - Vermilion

Sustainable Agriculture Association Annual Meeting

Kerry Wood Nature Centre

Red Deer March 20

Raphael Thierrin - 686-3310 - Calgary

Dairy Classic

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede

Calgary March 21-27

Joan Cool - 261-0162 - Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Northlands Farm and Ranch Show

Agricom

Edmonton March 22-25

Northlands - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Aggie Days

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede

Calgary March 23-26

Joan Cool - 261-0162 - Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Pesticide Applicator Training Tutorial

Vermilion, Class A, D, G, March 29-April 1

Edmonton, Class G, March 9-11

Christina Arvidsson-Kupchenko - 1-800-661-4127

Introductory Farrier Clinic

Lakeland College

Vermilion April 1-4

Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Cliff Elliot Cutting Clinic

Lakeland College

Vermilion April 1-4

Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation annual meeting

April 5-7

Gloria Prochinsky - 474-8288 - Edmonton

Cattle hoof trimming

Olds College

Olds April 5-8

April 12-15

Extension Services - 556-8344 - Olds

Stock Dog Training Clinic

Lakeland College

Vermilion April 8-10

Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

National Soil Conservation Week

April 10-16

Barb Shackel-Hardman - 422-4385 - Edmonton

Team cattle penning

Lakeland College

Vermilion April 15-17

Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

March 7, 1994**76th annual general meeting of Canadian Co-Operative Wool Growers Ltd.**

Winnipeg April 30
Donna - 613-257-2714 - Winnipeg

Cattle Event school

Lakeland College
Vermilion May 16-20
June 20-24
July 18-22
Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Team cattle penning

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary May 14-15
Joan Cool - 261-0162 - Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Alberta Dairy Congress

Black Gold Centre
Leduc June 2-4
Iris Yarish - 986-8108 - Leduc

4-H on Parade

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary June 3-5
Joan Cool - 261-0162; Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Livestock judging seminar

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary June 6-8
Joan Cool - 261-0162 - Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

National Farm and Ranch Business Management Education Association and international conference

Lethbridge Community College
Lethbridge June 12-16
John Calpas - 320-3311 - Lethbridge; John Whitehead - 320-3313 - Lethbridge

1994 Cowboy Poets gathering

Pincher Creek June 17-19
Anne Stevick - 627-4733 - Pincher Creek

Alberta Forage Council spring general meeting

Red Deer June 22
Laurel Aitken - 929-2019 - Beaumont

Wanham plowing matches

Wanham June 24-26
Shirley Wells - 694-3763/694-3915 - Wanham

Breton Plots Field Day

Breton (near) June 30
Jim Robertson - U of A Department of Soil Science - 492-0191

Farm Camp (Ages 9-12)

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 3-8
Christina Arvidsson-Kupchenko - 1-800-661-4127

CEF Western Rider School (Level I-IV)

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 4-8
Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Calgary Exhibition & Stampede

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary July 8-17
Joan Cool - 261-0162 - Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Summer Agricultural Education Institute

Fairview College
Fairview July 10-17
Betty Gabert - 427-2171 - Edmonton

Beginner Riding School

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 11-15
Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Klondike Days Exposition

Northlands
Edmonton July 21-30
Northlands - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Grasslands sheep exhibition

Assiniboia, SK July 22-24
Garry Noble - (306)642-7227 - Assiniboia

Indian Head zero tillage field day

Indian Head Experimental Farm
Indian Head, SK July 26-27
Ed Tanner - (306) 695-2263

Farmfair '94

AgriCom and Sportex
Edmonton November 4-12
Northlands - 471-7210 - Edmonton

1994 Peace Region Farm Women's Conference

Peace River November 17-18
Linda Hawk Sellin - 835-2291 - Fairview

Note: Alberta communities host a number of local fairs. Because there are so many, they are not listed in the "Coming Agricultural Events" list. A list of agricultural society fairs was compiled by the community and rural services branch and is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Coming agricultural events notice form

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in 1994? Are there any events omitted in the attached list?

1. Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by May 25, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Publishing Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News.
The next edition will be printed June 6, 1994)

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AGRI-NEWS

March 14, 1994

CANADIANA

6 1994

Research is a key in Ministry's three-year plan

Agricultural research continues to be a significant priority for the Government of Alberta, said Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Walter Paszkowski on March 4, 1994.

"Advances in research and technology have always been cornerstones of this province's agriculture and food industry," added Paszkowski. "As we developed the ministry's three-year business plan, research emerged as a continuing priority for the ministry.

"While the majority of programs received budget cuts, research will receive an overall increase of nearly 12 per cent by the end of the 1996-97 fiscal year," he said.

In November and December 1993, the agriculture and food industry was invited to participate in the development of the ministry's three-year business plan. During these consultations, participants strongly supported long-term investment in research.

The ministry's increased investment in research will be allocated to areas requiring greater research activity, such as market research and market intelligence. Increased applied research activities by field services staff will also enable more technology transfer activities to take place.

The ministry will also be able to increase its activities in three key areas: developing new information and technology, facilitating more partnerships and alliances, and encouraging more research conducted by the private sector.

Targeted research and technology transfer will help improve the global competitiveness, profitability and environmental soundness of Alberta's agri-food industry. Future research efforts by the ministry will aim at building a self-reliant, market-driven industry. In economically challenging times, this will require strong partnerships among public and private sector participants. Along with forming strong partnerships, the private sector will be encouraged to play a much larger role in funding research and determining research directions.

A leader in agricultural research, Alberta has compiled an impressive record of agricultural research achievements. These scientific advances have strongly contributed to an agriculture and food industry worth over \$10 billion annually to the provincial

economy. Research results that have provided major economic benefits to Alberta include:

- development of high-yielding, disease-resistant crops adaptable to Alberta's growing conditions. Alberta has one of the top barley breeding programs in the world.
- tremendous strides in livestock productivity.
- development of high-quality, safe and nutritious food products. Alberta's Food Processing Development Centre is a world-class pilot plant facility.
- improved resource management to ensure future sustainability of the industry.

Cont'd on page 2

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Paszkowski recently released the details of the agriculture ministry's three-year business plan. It's the blueprint for the future of Alberta's agriculture ministry and outlines the important role research will continue to play in the department's overall operation.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus C.D. Radke
427-2137 427-2145

is in keeping with our commitment to get out of the business of being in business."

Financial details will be released when the deal is closed.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus R.A. Splane
427-2137 679-1302 or
Dr. Ralph Christian
422-1072

Government privatizes Northern Lite Canola Inc.

The Government of Alberta has agreed to sell Northern Lite Canola Inc. (NLCI) to CIC Canola Industries Canada Inc. (CIC), formerly Deltaquad Ltd., for \$6 million announced Walter Paszkowski, Minister of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development on March 2, 1994.

The principal asset of NLCI is the canola crushing plant at Sexsmith, Alberta. The sale is contingent on CIC completing financing for the purchase by March 31, 1994. The agreement stipulates that CIC must continue to operate the plant for a minimum of three years.

"By selling NLCI to the private sector, we are fulfilling a promise to Albertans, while at the same time ensuring that Peace Country producers continue to have a stable market for their canola," said Paszkowski.

NLCI began business in the mid-1970s as Northern Alberta Rapeseed Producers (NARP). In 1987, the Alberta government purchased the fixed assets of Northern Alberta Rapeseed Producers from the receiver to carry out its stated intention to support the development and diversification of a world-class agricultural secondary processing industry in Alberta. Government's strategy has been to keep the crusher operating while offering the plant for sale to private sector owners who require crude canola oil for export or have a domestic refining capacity that requires the Sexsmith plant's output.

The main benefits of the plant to the area are: diversification of farm production in an area that has disadvantages because of climate and market distance; local employment through value-added manufacturing of canola oil and meal as the plant employs 65 people and indirect employment is estimated to be 400; and, an annual economic benefit to the area estimated to exceed \$200 million, including almost \$100 million of direct canola seed sales to the plant.

"The Province has received several proposals for the purchase of NLCI. This deal, which we have been working on since Oct. 1, 1993, besides being the best price, commits to maintain jobs for the employees for a minimum of one year and to crush a minimum of 125,000 metric tonnes of canola seed for each of the next three years," Paszkowski said.

CIC will link its Red Deer canola refinery and packaging plant with NLCI's crushing operation. "This will provide even further jobs and value-added processing in Alberta," said Paszkowski. "The time has come for the private sector to acquire this business. This

Road ban exemption for transporting pregnant mare urine

A recent amendment to the Public Vehicle Weight Regulation, under the Motor Transport Act, adds public vehicles transporting pregnant mare urine (PMU) to the list of vehicles exempt from road bans, says an Alberta Agriculture transportation analyst.

"Road bans are instituted to protect the roads when they are particularly susceptible to damage during spring thaw," said Keir Packer. "Under Section 3(1) of the Public Vehicle Weight Regulation there is provision for certain public vehicles to be exempt from road bans. Included in the exemption are school buses and vehicles transporting fresh milk or cream."

Packer noted that the amendment was made in response to a resolution by the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties.

"The exemption was provided because the production of this commodity is expanding rapidly and the regulations already exempt other perishable agricultural commodities," explained Packer.

PMU is a perishable commodity as it is refrigerated and shipped in temperature controlled trucks to processing plants.

Contact: Keir Packer Bob Coleman
427-0364 427-8906

Cow-calf producers should prepare for the future

Try to position your cow-calf business to accommodate the potential of lower market returns in the mid-1990s, but don't panic, says Ron Gietz, a livestock market analyst with Alberta Agriculture.

"Cow-calf producers may be in the twilight of one of the longest periods of profitability for the sector," said Gietz. "But, long-term forecasts have been calling for a downturn for some years now and it hasn't happened."

Gietz noted that any number of events could cause the current U.S. expansion to abort, or the Canadian dollar to remain weak.

"A lot of ifs go into a forecast for so far into the future," Gietz added. "The biggest if I see is the Canada/U.S. exchange rate which translates the prevailing U.S. price into a Canadian equivalent. A sharp appreciation of the dollar, in combination with lower U.S. prices, could spell trouble for producers.

Gietz says that based on the most recent USDA Cattle Inventory Report noting a three per cent increase in U.S. beef cow numbers, a reasonable expectation is for lower U.S. cattle prices in 1995 and 1996.

"Just as U.S. herd expansion has been modest, the extent of the price decline should also be modest," said Gietz.

He added that U.S. slaughter steer prices could average in the mid-\$60/cwt range by 1996, compared to a possible 1994 average of \$73/cwt.

"If American producers respond swiftly to lower prices by cutting back their herds, prices could rebound upwards, beginning as soon as 1997," noted Gietz. "If the beef herd remains at a larger level, the price weakness will last longer."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Exchange rates are key to slaughter cattle market

The exchange rate could again be a source of uncertainty for Canadian slaughter cattle markets in coming weeks and months says an Alberta Agriculture livestock market analyst.

"The recent national budget and the upcoming Quebec election could add volatility to the exchange rates," said Ron Gietz.

He added that current forecasts are based on a \$0.74 dollar, as compared to the \$0.76 dollar in the previous forecasts. He is calling for Alberta Direct Sale Steers to be: March, \$93/cwt; April, \$94/cwt; May, \$93/cwt; June, \$92/cwt; July, \$91/cwt; and, August, \$90/cwt. Gietz also sees Edmonton D1,2 Cows at \$62/cwt for March, April and May; \$63/cwt in June and July; and, \$64/cwt in August.

"Market strategies should focus on looking for forward pricing opportunities for the summer onwards, based on more optimism in the live cattle futures market," said Gietz. "Also consider taking advantage of any sharp dips in the Canada/U.S. exchange rate, to lock in the dollar."

Looking at the U.S. fed cattle market, Gietz says that prices appear likely to move into a \$75-\$78/cwt range by mid April, as supplies of feedlot cattle finally begin to dwindle.

"Some price increases may occur as early as this month," said Gietz.

After months of struggling with weak markets and negative margins, U.S. cattle feeders grew more optimistic in mid February. Wholesale beef and slaughter cattle prices rallied on talk of pent-up retail demand after cold weather and earthquakes. Cattle feeders also claimed the biggest bulge in supplies was behind them.

"Adding to the encouraging tone in U.S. markets was the February 1, 1994 Seven State Cattle on Feed Report which indicated a reasonable pace of marketings during January and another month of relatively low placements to cattle onto feed," said Gietz. "The net result was feedlot inventories only one per cent above those of February 1, 1993, but still very high when compared to 1992 and other recent years."

Gietz noted that with the highest number of cattle on feed since February of 1974 in the U.S., it is hard to be too positive about the slaughter cattle prospects.

"Still, recent months of light placements is encouraging for U.S. fed cattle markets in the second half of 1994."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Canola production survey available

Farmers growing canola for the first time or farmers who would like to improve their yields, will find the information in the *Alberta Canola Production Survey* useful says Alberta Agriculture's supervisor of oilseed crops.

"We anticipate a major increase in the number of acres planted to canola this year, meaning there will be a lot of first-time canola growers involved," said Phillip Thomas of the Field Crop Development Centre in Lacombe. "This publication is of use to all canola growers as it is packed with data, observations and recommendations."

It was compiled after 322 top canola producers were surveyed during the fall of 1991 and the early winter of 1992. District agriculturists selected producers from all parts of Alberta to participate in the survey. Once the data was collected, five months was spent analyzing it in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch. The results were published in April of 1993.

The survey contains information on many different aspects of growing canola including: soil types and textures, crop rotation, over-winter soil protection, tillage practices, herbicide and fertilizer use, seeding rates, seeding methods, varieties and pest control.

"The survey contains a pile of statistics for comparison and it also has an easy-to-read summary," noted Thomas. The information is good and will provide farmers with ideas they might not otherwise consider."

"An hour or two with the survey will be time well spent," added Thomas.

He noted that most of the producers surveyed used many of the same techniques when growing canola, but the top producers paid closer attention to detail and didn't take anything for granted.

"The top producers used all of the best techniques whereas the lesser producers put less emphasis on some practices," said Thomas.

Thomas used seeding rates as an example. "A higher percentage of the top growers seeded heavier."

Copies of the *Alberta Canola Production Survey* are available from Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the publications office at 7000 - 113 St., Edmonton, Alta. T6H 5T6.

Contact: Phillip Thomas
782-4641



Agri-News Briefs

Farmers' market workshop

A workshop titled, Farmers' Market Opportunities - Now & in the Future, is being held at the AVC/St. Stephens School in Valleyview on Saturday, March 19, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The workshop will look at Farmers' Markets from the vendor's point of view—how to be aware of and meet the demands of the consumer. Several guest speakers will also discuss increasing revenues through improved products and marketing. This is the first workshop of its kind for northwest Alberta. Those attending are asked to register in advance by contacting their local Alberta Agriculture district office. Registration fees are \$15 per person or \$20 per couple, including lunch. For more information call 524-3301 or 524-3942.

Recipe contest underway

With the support of Alberta Education, the Alberta Canola Producers Commission is offering Alberta junior high and high school students who are studying cooking, food service or home economics, as well as 4-H food club members, the opportunity to participate in the 1995 Calendar Recipe Contest. Recognizing teenagers as good cooks and creative thinkers, it is the commission's hope that some fantastic recipes can be shared with others through the printing of the calendar. Recipes will be judged on nutritional value, creativity, presentation and clarity. The contest closes on May 15, 1994. For more information or contest entry forms contact the Alberta Canola Producers Commission in Edmonton at 452-6487.

Vegetable gardening course available

A one-day vegetable gardening course is being offered by the University of Alberta at the Devonian Botanic Garden on Saturday, March 26, from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The course will examine a range of vegetable varieties available and useful for our northern gardening location. Lois Hole, the author of *Northern Vegetable Gardening*, will discuss the best methods of growing and harvesting these varieties, as well as planning your garden for this spring. The course registration fee is \$29. The Devonian Botanic Garden is located 3 km north of Devon on Highway 60. For more information contact Gordon Nielson at 987-3054.

AGRI-NEWS

March 21, 1994

CANADIANA

APR 6 1994

How the Crow flies - Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program rules

The Crow Benefit Offset Program ends on March 31, 1994 and it is important for program participants to understand how this will affect them says Alberta Agriculture's livestock support branch head.

"With the program coming to an end there are several rules and deadlines that producers must meet in order to be eligible to claim," said John Larson.

Larson explained that to be eligible, purchased feed grain must be delivered to the site where the livestock is fed, by March 31, 1994. The grain must also be fed by May 31, 1994, to livestock that were on hand on or before March 31, 1994. In addition, the grain must be paid for in full and a certificate issued by June 30, 1994. All unused certificates and pink copies of unused certificates must be returned by July 31, 1994.

There are a few variations for registrants who issue non arm's length transaction (NALT) certificates, where there is a common business interest between the feed user and the feed seller. NALT grain must be fed to livestock by March 31, 1994 and the certificates must be supported by documentation, such as scale tickets. June 30, 1994 is the last day to issue a NALT certificate and July 31, 1994 is the last day to return all unused certificates and pink copies of used certificates.

For those producers with home grown grain, it must be fed by March 31, 1994 to livestock sold in legitimate, arm's length transactions by March 31, 1994. Claiming procedures will not change. The livestock must be sold by March 31, 1994, and sales receipts must be submitted with claims. Claim forms for home grown grain must be submitted by August 31, 1994.

"With home grown grain the rules vary slightly if the grain is being fed to breeding herds," said Larson. "The feed still must be fed by March 31, 1994, but the livestock doesn't have to be sold.

"These deadlines will be enforced," emphasized Larson.

Letters detailing this information have already been mailed to program registrants. More information can be obtained by

contacting the Crow Benefit Offset Program offices at 1-800-232-9479 or Edmonton RITE at 422-0015.

Contact: John Larson Sheila Devereux
422-0015 422-0015

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Water runs uphill

Large volumes of groundwater and dissolved salts are pulled uphill from water bodies and cause extensive saline rings at the edges, says Sanjay Kumar, a contract researcher with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

"The volumes of water and salt are considerably larger than expected," said Kumar. "The volumes are large because the flow of groundwater is mainly through the upper soil which has very large conducting pores."

Research carried out through a salinity project, sponsored by Canada - Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Agreement (CAESA) provides evidence that sizeable amounts of water move laterally uphill from sloughs and wet spots, at very shallow depths.

Kumar explained that two types of ground water flow cause salinity. One flow moves uphill, shallow and parallel to the surface. It is most prominent around sloughs, ponds and wet spots. The other, better known, flow is deep through subsoil and bedrock and usually moves downhill due to gravity. (See Figure 1.)

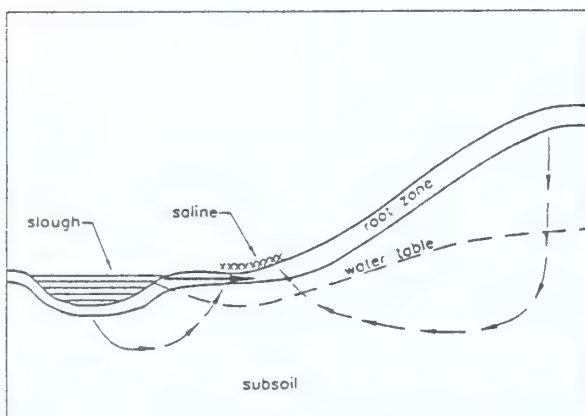


Figure 1.
Typical mechanisms of slough ring and sidehill saline seeps.

"What we are finding, through modelling, is that the shallow uphill flows around water bodies with no vegetation at the edges, are much more important than previously thought. This phenomena is common in fields which are worked, in particular summerfallowed, right up to the edge of the water," said Kumar.

"Because the groundwater flow in the slough ring type of saline seep is very shallow, more alternatives to control the problem may be available and at a lower cost," says Hank VanderPluym, Alberta Agriculture's conservation section head.

He indicates that even shallow vegetative or mechanical controls may be successful in stemming the flow of groundwater.

"Controls may include forage, trees and annuals," said VanderPluym.

Potential control measures will be evaluated as part of the on-going research. Two computer models will be used to test the effectiveness of the proposed controls. Based on the test results,

salinity control recommendations will be developed and introduced at the three research sites in Alberta for further evaluation. The three sites are located at Carmangay, Crossfield and Forestburg.

The CAESA - salinity research project is a joint undertaking between Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the University of Saskatchewan. It is in the first year of a four-year commitment.

Contact: Hank VanderPluym
422-4385

Cab charcoal filter use on the rise

More Alberta farmers are using basic and extra protective clothing and equipment when handling and using pesticides, and part of that extra protection is a charcoal filter in their tractor cab.

"While you're doing some pre-spring work on your equipment, check with your equipment dealer for a filter," suggests Karen Malyk, Alberta Agriculture's protective clothing research associate.

Malyk notes in a recent survey of farmers who took part in the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program, about 22.3 per cent had equipped their tractor cabs with charcoal filters. The filter helps reduce exposure to chemicals when the farmer is spraying. "It's just another way to protect yourself," she adds.

"Charcoal filters should be used only when spraying and removed when the spraying season is finished to lengthen the life of the charcoal," notes Keith Price, a department specialist who helped design the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program.

How long a filter lasts depends on a number of factors such as the numbers of hours spraying, the particular pesticide that was used and the weather conditions.

There are also precautions in using a filter notes Malyk. "Just as with disposable gloves and coveralls or a respirator filter, a cab filter has a limited lifespan. If you can smell a chemical odor in the cab, it's time to replace the filter, just as you would with a respirator."

Malyk noted that there is a cost savings associated with using cab filters as the charcoal can be replaced without having to replace the entire filter.

In addition to using filters, other steps should be taken to make tractor cabs safe. Farmers are encouraged to remove chemical contaminated clothing before entering their cab.

"This is an area where great improvement has been made," said Malyk. "Eighty-three per cent of surveyed farmers now say they never wear contaminated clothing in their tractor. This is an increase of 30 per cent which is great."

Malyk also suggests the tractor cab is a good place to have clean washing water and a first aid kit, for emergency purposes.

For more information on protective clothing and equipment, farm families can contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Cont'd on page 3

As well as pamphlets and videos on pesticide safety and protective clothing, district offices have information on available Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program courses, running until the end of March.

Contact: Karen Malyk Keith Price
427-2412 427-5341

Farm safety sponsors reaffirm commitments

TransAlta Utilities and NOVA Corporation are again working with Alberta Agriculture to pass along a farm safety message to rural school students.

"We are very pleased to announce that these two companies will again join us as sponsors of our annual Child's Guide to Farm Safety," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, farm safety program manager. "TransAlta Utilities and NOVA have been great sponsors in the past and we are pleased to be working with them again in 1994-95."

"TransAlta is proud to be part of the Child's Guide to Farm Safety program as it fits well with our commitment to educating young people about safety practices," says Judy Stiell, a community relations co-ordinator. "Thousands of farm children, province-wide, take a safety message home as a result of this program," says Jody MacPherson, a NOVA Corporation community involvement specialist. "NOVA is proud to be a sponsor of this well-respected publication."

Alberta Agriculture has produced the guide since 1976. It features farm safety activities for elementary school children and emphasizes learning activities that are fun.

The 1993-94 edition was made available to school officials just before Christmas and within a few weeks all 40,000 copies were spoken for. A reprint of 5,000 guides was placed to fill additional requests.

The 1994-95 edition of the guide features a safety theme and winning poster and essay entries from the previous year. Submissions from the 1993-94 edition are due by June 30, 1994.

"We are very pleased with the response of all those involved with the guide—the sponsors, school officials and the students," says Kyeremanteng.

For more information about the child's guide or other farm safety programs and materials, call the farm safety office in Edmonton at 427-2186.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng Judy Stiell or
427-2186 267-4930
Jody MacPherson at 423-6127

4-H announces new scholarship for 1994

The Canadian 4-H Council has a new scholarship awards program in 1994 thanks to the support of the Farm Credit Corporation (FCC).

The FCC program will provide 16 scholarships of \$1,000 to 4-H members across Canada, starting April 1, 1994. It will run for three years and was designed to extend FCC's commitment to the Canadian 4-H Council.

To qualify for a scholarship, 4-H members must write a 500 to 1,000-word essay on the importance of agriculture to Canada, agriculture and the environment, or why support rural Canada.

The new scholarship awards were officially announced at the National 4-H Conference in November.

The Canadian 4-H Council has also announced the first winners of two other new scholarships: The Co-operators 4-H Scholarship Award, sponsored by The Co-operators, Canada's largest domestic owned multi-line insurance company; and, the Harvest Trust Scholarship Fund, co-ordinated by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, on behalf of a number of organizations from all across Canada.

The 1993 winners of The Co-operators 4-H Scholarship are: Andrea Wojcik of High River, Alberta; Edi Garrett, British Columbia; Jacqueline Everest, Saskatchewan; Kirk Saban, Manitoba; Paula Conklin, Ontario; Chantal Clement, Quebec; Tim Dixon, Prince Edward Island; Lisa Firminger, Nova Scotia; Sonya Riordon, New Brunswick; and Colin Barker, Newfoundland.

The Harvest Trust Scholarship Fund was set up to encourage 4-H members to set higher educational goals, allow access to a university degree in agriculture and heighten awareness of agricultural issues as they pertain to crop protection.

The 1993 winners are: Janette Caldwell of Altario, Alberta; Dana Bentley, British Columbia; Raelene Ostrom, Saskatchewan; Zenon Forster, Manitoba; Colleen Switzer, Ontario; Marie-France Reid, Quebec; John Wood, Prince Edward Island; Andrew Poehl, Nova Scotia; and Julie Weir, New Brunswick.

For more 4-H scholarship information contact Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch at 2nd Floor J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 St., Edmonton, Alta. T6H 5T6 or 422-4444.

Contact: Aaron Madson
422-4444

Strawberry selection a key

Selecting the proper type, or combination of types, can ensure your garden contains ripe strawberries through the summer and into the fall says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Strawberries are popular with home gardeners because they have the ability to produce large amounts of fruit, and the fresh-from-your-garden flavor is hard to beat," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticulture Research Center in Brooks.

"June-bearers, ever-bearers and neutral-bearers are the three main types," says Barkley. "By using one type or combining types, you can control when you'll have berries."

June-bearers produce a single crop each year. This is usually for a three or four week period in July. Their first crop is harvested the year after they are planted. Common varieties are Kent, Glooscap and Bounty.

The ever-bearing strawberries produce two crops. One crop is usually in late June or early July. The second crop can be expected in late August. Sometimes these strawberries produce lightly throughout the summer and fall.

An advantage of the ever-bearing varieties is that when planted early, you can probably harvest a small crop late the same year. Ogallala and Fort Laramie are common ever-bearing varieties.

Day neutral varieties may produce in June and July, take a short rest, and then produce heavy crops until the first hard frost in the fall. Tristar, Hecker and Fern are a few of the common varieties.

Barkley says 100 plants should provide a family of four with enough fruit for fresh eating plus preserving for winter-use.

"Once you decide how many plants you want, you'll need a site. If you're planning on starting a strawberry patch, choose a well-drained, sunny location. Ideally, the spot should also be protected from strong winds. The soil pH should be in the five to seven range," she says.

For the best weed control the site should be cultivated the year before you plant the strawberry plants. Adding organic matter, such as well-rotted manure or compost, will aid in creating a loose, rich and well-drained soil.

The most suitable time to plant strawberries is in the spring, as soon as land can be worked—April or May. Cultivate the site and level it before actually planting. Fall planting isn't recommended as it's seldom successful.

Roots should be kept moist while planting. "You can do this by wrapping the plants in wet burlap and carrying them in a pail or basket," says Barkley.

When planting, the strawberry plant's crown mid-point should be level with the soil surface. "Covering the crown with soil causes the plant to either rot or fail to send out runners. But, if you set the plant in too shallow, the crown and roots can dry out. So, you need to strike a balance," she says.

After placing the plant, firm the soil around the roots, water well and then check the plant depth. Barkley says gardeners can

apply a starter solution to the plants. She recommends a 10-30-10 or 10-52-10 solution.

"Strawberry plants do need care and attention," she notes. Among those needs are keeping the patch weed-free by hoeing or pulling weeds. With newly set June-bearers, remove flower stalks to allow the plant to produce runners.

"You may also have to deal with birds that like succulent strawberries as much as you and your family do," adds Barkley. Ways to deter birds include frequently picking berries, noise makers, brightly colored flags or streamers hung above the crops, aluminum pie tins suspended on a stake or a commercially available, bird scare tape.

Strawberries should be picked as soon as the fruit is red all over. "Flavor and quality won't improve, in fact they will deteriorate," she says.

During the peak season, picking is probably necessary every other day. Another of Barkley's picking tips is to snip the fruit off the plant behind the hull with your thumb. "This ensures the cap stays on the fruit and that will help maintain its quality," she says.

*Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391*

Agri-News Briefs

Acreage and urban lawns course offered

A one-day lawns course is being offered by the University of Alberta at the Devonian Gardens on April 6, from 7-10 p.m. The course will centre around maintenance practices, such as mowing, watering and fertilizing. Instructor Lorraine Taylor will also teach you to identify and control common lawn problems. Other topic will include new lawn construction, old lawn renovation and alternate ground covers. The course registration is \$24. The Devonian Botanic Garden is located 3 km north of Devon, Alta. on Highway 60. For more information contact Gordon Nielson at 987-3054.

Olds College holds open house

The gates to Olds College swing open to the public on April 9, as the college holds Open House '94. The event gets underway with a traditional flapjack breakfast between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. The rest of the day can easily be filled with tours to the many different facilities at the college. They include a modern farm operation, a land sciences centre and the learning and career resource centres. This year's Canadian Intercollegiate Rodeo Finals is also being held in conjunction with the college's open house. The rodeo runs April 8 to 10. For more information on the rodeo or the open house contact Shelley Brolsma at 556-4611.

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AGRI-NEWS

March 28, 1994

CANADIANA

AVH
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Spring clean-up includes field rodents

Warm, sunny days and spring clean-up may seem a long time away, but plans for field rodent control should be underway now says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Many people wait for warm weather before tackling ground squirrel—commonly called gopher—and pocket gopher problems, only to learn they are several weeks too late," says John Bourne, northeast regional supervisor of problem wildlife.

A well planned, early assault on field rodents, just as they emerge from hibernation and start feeding above ground, produces the best results.

Once removed, the key to keeping fields free from neighboring ground squirrels is preventing outsiders from entering the field. Summer-long vigilance and treatment is necessary for success. Bourne recommends several control efforts in peripheral areas such as fencelines.

"A variety of products, services and techniques are recommended or registered for ground squirrel control," notes Bourne. "The use and limits of each, depend upon the severity, location and type of problem."

Occasionally, ground squirrels will damage lawns, gardens or ornamentals. Bourne suggests these can usually be handled by exclusion, removal with a live capture or leg hold trap.

However, most problems with ground squirrels involve crop, forage or pasture land. In large areas, a pre-mixed bait—strychnine on meal pellets or cereal grain—works well.

For the best results, offer food baits to ground squirrels when their numbers are low and the natural food supply is scarce. This means treating fields early in the spring, when only adults are out. Baits work best if lush, green growth is absent.

"Don't wait until after green-up because new, succulent plant growth is much more attractive to ground squirrels than baits," explains Bourne.

Concentrated liquid strychnine is no longer available for ground squirrel control. However, pre-mixed strychnine baits—strychnine mixed with bait by the manufacturer—are still available.

Another product, zinc phosphide (ZnP) two per cent in pellet form, is registered for ground squirrels, but isn't very effective.

Although poisons such as strychnine and ZnP generally only require a single feed, they have some disadvantages. The most common problems are their unattractive taste to rodents, and the potential hazard to non-targets, such as livestock, pets and wildlife.

Anticoagulants are another popular bait that work well and are generally safer than strychnine or ZnP. Chlorophacinone and diphacinone are two anticoagulants. Both interfere with blood clotting. They cause a painless death from internal bleeding, three or more days after the anticoagulant is eaten.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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"Anticoagulant concentrates, such as Liquid Lightening and Liquid Rozol, are safe, effective, humane and relatively inexpensive," adds Bourne. "Their only disadvantage is they require more than one feeding to be effective."

Anticoagulant concentrates must be thoroughly mixed with a fresh supply of clean, hullless cereal grain. Carefully follow the directions on the container's label. Anticoagulant concentrates are also registered for ground squirrel control for residential use in towns and cities.

To be effective, ground squirrels must eat treated bait for at least two days in a row. There are two methods of baiting. To hand bait, place about 5ml (one teaspoon) of bait in a burrow entrance. If the bait is gone after 48 hours, all holes should be rebated. A third baiting might be necessary for complete control.

Remove all unused bait. Fill in burrow entrances and check in 24 hours to see if the bait has worked.

An alternative to hand baiting is placing bait in protected stations throughout an infested area. Each station should be checked daily to maintain an uninterrupted supply of bait for up to three weeks, or until feeding stops.

Bait stations can be made from 20 litre cans. Cut eight to 10, three to four inch entrances in the side, near the bottom. Stations can also be made from old tires. Cut holes in the face of the tire.

"Bait stations should be secured to the ground and covered so they can't be upset by domestic animals, particularly dogs," says Bourne. "All poisons are potentially dangerous and should be handled with the utmost care."

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Minimizing environmental effects

Farmers should take an active approach to minimizing potential negative affects of fertilizers and pesticides on their farms says an Alberta Agriculture soil fertility research scientist.

"There is increasing environmental concern over potential contamination of soils, surface water and groundwater with the use of fertilizers and pesticides," says Ross McKenzie. "Many research projects on environmentally sustainable farming practices are currently underway, but farmers don't have to wait for their results. Farmers can take a pro-active stance now."

Nitrate leaching from surface soils into groundwater is one potential problem. It can occur if manure or commercial fertilizers are applied at rates greater than the crop requires; or, if there is excessive rainfall or irrigation.

McKenzie identifies six areas where farmers can take action to minimize nitrate leaching. They include: selecting appropriate application rates; correct method and timing of application; crop rotation; careful use of animal manure; summerfallow techniques; and, irrigation management.

Proper application rates start with soil testing for nitrogen levels to determine the optimum nitrogen fertilizer or manure application rate. Next, select realistic yields and application according to crop requirements. Take all sources of nitrogen into account, including crop residue. Finally, recognize different areas in the same field may require different fertilizer rates.

The method and timing of application is also important. McKenzie suggests banding over broadcasting fertilizer. Another idea is to use split application for long season, irrigated crops grown on sandy soils using fertigation [fertilizing through an irrigation system]. Split application is also ideal for hay and pasture land. McKenzie also recommends late fall, when the weather is cooler, as the best time for fall nitrogen application.

"Including legumes in a crop rotation will reduce the need for fertilizer, although generated nitrogen could still contribute to nitrate leaching," says McKenzie.

Use animal manure carefully and at conservative rates says McKenzie. He recommends soil testing to determine soil nitrate levels and matching estimated nitrogen release from manure with crop requirements.

Application of both liquid and solid manure should be done with care near surface water. With liquid manure, application should be at least 10 metres from the water. A distance of five metres should be maintained when using solid manure.

Summerfallow continues to be a contributor to nitrate leaching he adds. This can be minimized by using flex cropping in drier areas and continuous cropping in moist areas.

Irrigation management can also minimize leaching. Farmers should schedule irrigation to match soil moisture with applied water and crop water requirements.

Phosphate leaching from surface soil into groundwater isn't a problem. Phosphorus attaches itself to soil particles so isn't mobile in soil. However, phosphates can be carried to surface water through run-off.

"Phosphate contamination of surface water can be avoided if farmers control wind and water erosion," says McKenzie.

Pesticides in surface waters are rare in Alberta. "Herbicides have been found in irrigation canals and return flow streams in southern Alberta, but the levels have been below water quality guidelines for drinking water standards," says Denise Maurice, Alberta Agriculture's weed research supervisor.

"The likely means of transportation for herbicides into surface water is wind and water erosion," explains Maurice. "This reinforces the importance of soil conservation by farmers."

Maurice adds that recent studies have also detected herbicides in shallow groundwater below irrigated fields. Leaching occurs when excess water is available before herbicides breakdown.

Herbicide problems can also be minimized by: using herbicides with lower solubility and leaching potential; carefully matching herbicides to soil types; avoiding application if heavy rains are forecast; not irrigating for at least 24 hours after application;

ensuring proper sprayer calibration; and, careful handling during sprayer tank filling.

"These are just a few ideas for how farmers can take a pro-active role when dealing with fertilizers and herbicides," notes McKenzie.

Contact: Ross McKenzie Denise Maurice
381-5126 427-2530 or
Joan Rodvang at 381-5883

CWB increases wheat payments

Wheat farmers will be receiving some extra money as the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) has adjusted its 1993-94 initial wheat payment.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister Ralph Goodale announced the increase on March 10, 1994. The increase is effective March 18, 1994. Producers who delivered wheat between Aug. 1, 1993 and March 17, 1994 will receive the adjustment payments by mail. The cheques are to be mailed on April 19.

"Depending on grade and class of wheat, the adjustment payment will be \$5 to \$10 per metric tonne," says Larry Ruud, Alberta Agriculture's grain and oilseeds market analyst. "This is not unusual for this time of year as the CWB has gone through two-thirds to three-quarters of the marketing year and is becoming more comfortable with its final pool returns."

The initial payment is made to producers when they deliver their grain. It represents a portion of the expected price for the crop year and is guaranteed by the federal government. An adjustment can be made to this payment if prices go up during the year. A final payment may also be made after the close of the crop year of any money still owed to producers.

Contact: Larry Ruud
427-5387

4-H looking for "key leaders"

Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch is introducing a new program that will designate a "key leader" for each 4-H district in the province says a provincial 4-H specialist.

"4-H is looking for key leaders to act as resource people to all the leaders," says Penny Wilkes. "The new program will be of major importance to both 4-H leaders and district councils."

The home economics and 4-H branch will begin training key leaders this fall. Key leaders will deal with leader questions and concerns in their district. This could include how-to complete yearly diaries, help members with public speaking, get parents more involved or keep senior members in a club.

"Key leaders will have practical, hands-on suggestions for leaders and will be as close as their phone," explains Wilkes. "We are

looking for volunteers who are willing to commit two years to the position."

A candidate for a key leader position should have at least three years experience as a 4-H leader, but not currently be an active leader or council member at any level. Potential key leaders should also be committed to the goals of the 4-H program, be knowledgeable about club operations, be creative, be enthusiastic about meeting new people and be willing to attend training sessions.

If you, or someone you know, would be interested in becoming a key leader, call your regional 4-H specialist or contact the 4-H provincial office at 427-2541.

Contact: Penny Wilkes
427-2541

Easy rewards in growing raspberries

Raspberries are one of the easiest and most rewarding fruits to grow in your home garden says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"They produce a generous crop within the second year of planting," notes Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "And, raspberries can grow anywhere."

"A row eight metres long will supply enough fruit for eating fresh raspberries, preserving fruit and making jam for a family of four," she adds. While raspberries will grow most anywhere, a sandy loam soil with high organic matter is best. Wind protection is also important as wind dehydrates the plants and soil, as well as breaking off canes at the crown.

"Good soil preparation is essential for this long-term crop," she says. "Two musts are summerfallowing the planting site and adding organic matter—peat moss, compost or well rotted manure—the season before you plant."

Summerfallowing helps control persistent weeds and helps blend the organic matter into the soil. The organic matter improves drainage or the water holding capacity of the soil.

"Start your raspberry patch with food quality, certified, disease-free plants," she advises. "Also, plant as early as possible in the spring." Recommended varieties include Boyne, Festival and Killarney. Honeyqueen is a yellow fruit variety.

Set rows three to four metres apart. Plant the plants between 70 and 100 cm apart in the rows. While planting, keep roots moist as rootlets can dry out quickly. Set the plants slightly deeper than their original planting depth at the nursery. Water-in the plants as soon as possible. Cut canes back to a height of 13 to 15 cm to encourage good root establishment.

Raspberry plants need between 2.5 and 3.5 cm of water each week from the time they blossom until the end of harvest. "This will ensure a good quality fruit yield," says Barkley. "The amount of water your raspberries will need depends on the soil type and

weather conditions. The best indicator of soil moisture is grabbing a handful of soil and feeling it."

Fruit can be harvested when berries easily separate from their receptacle. Fruit should be well-colored, but firm. Remove berries carefully from the plants and place in baskets.

Barkley has several picking tips. "You should pick raspberries three to four times a week. Another tip is to use small containers, as you can crush the fruit on the bottom with a large container. Don't pick during the heat of the day and take the berries from the patch as soon as possible."

Red raspberries have a perennial root system, but bear fruit biennially. New shoots or suckers are sent up every year. In the first year suckers complete their physical growth. The next year the canes fruit and die.

Each spring Barkley advises cutting off all dead plant materials, weak canes and any surplus strong canes at ground level. "Leave nine to 10 sturdy canes per metre. These canes should be 15 cm apart," she says.

If the patch is diseased, she suggests pruning, then burning or discarding the affected plant material at the end of the fruiting season. "If there aren't any diseases, leave the canes in the patch. They can help trap snow and aid winter plant protection," she notes.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

"The idea of the fair is to teach young people about all aspects of agriculture. The aim is to exhibit what children do with ag themes in school and to share it with other students, teachers and the public," says Gabert. "The entries came in many forms. There were posters, displays, and literary works."

Fair judges represented both agriculture and education. Creative approach, dramatic value, written report or communication and conformation to class guidelines are educational judging criteria. The agriculture portion of the judging centres around a correct agricultural message and dramatic appeal. Entries are scored out of a possible 200 points.

"We would like to thank all of the over 150 sponsors and volunteers who contributed so much time and effort towards making this fair possible," says Gabert. "A special thank you goes to the Alberta Pool for being the major sponsor of the Ag Ambassador Program."

Agricultural Ambassador Program staff are already planning for next year's fair. The 1995 fair location and date will be announced in the fall.

Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2402

Record number entries at Ag Ambassador School Fair

The provincial Agricultural Ambassador School Fair continues to grow in popularity with a record number of entries in 1994 says Alberta Agriculture's agricultural awareness specialist.

"We thought we had lots of entries last year with over 900, but this year we topped the 1,400 mark," says Betty Gabert. "The number and quality of entries was phenomenal."

Students from throughout the province participated in this year's fair, held in Camrose on February 24 and 25. They competed in four divisions: grades one to three, grades four to six, grades seven to nine and grades 10 to 12. There are several classes—related to subjects such as science and language arts—in each division.

Ribbons were awarded to the top five finishers in each class. The top three in each class also received cash prizes. The high point winner in each division won an all expense paid weekend for themselves and their family to Calgary, courtesy of the Alberta Pool.

The high point winners were Devin Fletcher, a grade three student from St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School in Taber; Michelle Prediger, a grade six student from St. Patrick School in Camrose; Lanette Prediger, a grade nine student from St. Patrick School in Camrose; and, Rhoda Gross, a grade 10 student from Athabasca Colony School in Athabasca.

Agri-News Briefs

Developing rural potential conference planned

Developing business ideas and opportunities in rural Alberta will be the topic of a one-day conference scheduled for the Hillcrest School in Blumenort on April 19. Blumenort is located in the Northern Peace and is central to Fort Vermilion and LaCrete. A guest speaker will discuss developing business ideas. Other topics include marketing alternative forages, farm woodlots and value-added wood products, value-added food products, and new approaches to gardening and marketing vegetables and berries. Participants can ask questions at panel session. The closing address is on how to take a realistic look at ideas to determine if they represent an opportunity. Pre-registration, before April 15, costs \$20 per individual or \$30 per couple. Registration at the door is \$25 per person. Registration includes lunch. The conference gets underway with registration at 8:30 a.m. For more information, contact Brent Sears at 926-4233 in Fort Vermilion or Margurite Thiessen at 836-3351 in Manning.

Peace region soil conservation information

Two days of information and field demonstrations will highlight the Conservation and Equipment Field Days planned for the Donnelly area on May 30 and 31. The first day features seminars on weed control in reduced tillage at the Donnelly Sportex. For more information, on the seminars contact the Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association (SARDA) in Falher at 837-2211. On day two at least 10 different direct seeders will be demonstrated in stubble and cultivated soil. Chaff spreader demonstrations and a number of equipment displays will also be featured. Day two activities take place at plots located at the Donnelly Corner. For more information on day two demonstrations, contact Jeanne Bisson at 837-2211.

Hoof trimming courses at Olds College

Cattle and horse hoof care and trimming courses are offered by Olds College during April. Cattle hoof trimming runs April 12 through 15. The course covers the need for hoof trimming, anatomy and physiology of feet and legs, how to select and prepare hoof nippers and how to handle cattle with and without a trimming table. The horse hoof care and trimming courses is April 15 through 17. It covers the basics of hoof care, how to treat minor hoof ailments and how to recognize major problems. Proper trimming methods are also covered, so participants can do some of the necessary work on their own stock. For more information, contact Olds College Extension at 556-8344.

Landscape construction course

A landscape construction course is being offered by the University of Alberta at the Devonian Botanic Garden on April 11, 18 and 25, May 2 and 9. The five-night course—7 p.m. through 9:30 p.m.—covers using wood and water in your hard landscaping plan. The wood side has information on site planning and plant materials with walls, wooden structures, barbecues, patios, driveways and walkways. The water portion of the course deals with fountains, bird baths, waterfalls, streams and ponds. The course registration fee is \$58. The Devonian Botanic Garden is located 3 km north of Devon on Highway 60. For more information, contact Gordon Nielson at 987-3054.

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AGRI-NEWS

April 4, 1994

CANADIANA

APR 26 1994

"I Care Postcard" promotes farm safety

With a giant-sized "I care" message for their favorite farmers, a grade four class in Vermilion launched a province-wide farm safety campaign.

The huge postcard is a replica of what other Alberta students can send to their favorite farmer. Those students will be encouraged to create artwork for the front of a postcard and also to write a short safety message. The 1994 I Care Postcard campaign marks the fourth consecutive year Alberta Agriculture, John Deere Limited and the Alberta Women's Institutes have joined forces with rural school children in a safety campaign.

I Care's promotional brochure provides space for artwork and message from the student to their favorite farmer, whether a parent, grandparent, other relative, neighbor or friend. The first of these 10,000 brochures were given out at the Vermilion Elementary School launch on March 31.

Women's Institute members across the province will distribute the brochures to rural schools. Contest brochures will also be available at John Deere dealerships.

Brochures explain how the student's postcards can be entered in a provincial contest. John Deere Limited supplies the prizes and will host prize presentation ceremonies after winners are announced. The contest closes on June 15, 1994.

The most important ingredient in the campaign is the children who participate. Over 1,500 children took part in the first two farm safety campaigns. That number doubled in 1993.

"We are looking for a big response again this year," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager. "The more entries we get, the more aware people become. We feel awareness is a top priority in making people more safety conscious."

"I guarantee Alberta farmers will receive special mail this summer," he adds. "Children are creative and they will have some special drawings and messages for their favorite farmers. It's also through this creativity that we hope to raise safety awareness."

"John Deere Limited is pleased to be part of the I Care Postcard campaign," says Bonnie Hayden, advertising manager for John Deere Limited. "Response over the past three years has been exceptional and we are looking forward to having even more

children take part in 1994. I know the children are going to have a blast with the postcard concept."

In last year's campaign students were asked to draw or write about their Super Safety Hero. The hero could be anyone with good safety habits. A character named Farm Accident was the focus of the 1992 campaign. The campaign's message was injury or damage can come without warning. The first campaign, Your Key to Farm Safety, emphasized shutting off farm equipment when leaving or repairing it. Students were asked to place a silver key decal on machinery and vehicles, then write about where they put it.

In conjunction with this year's campaign launch, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development released the 1993 farm fatality and injury accident statistics. [See separate story.]

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng (403) 427-2186
Bonnie Hayden (416) 945-9281

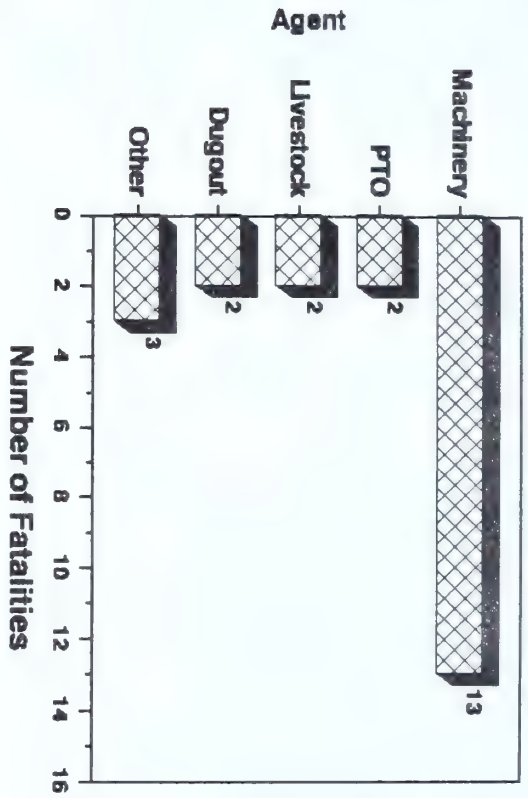
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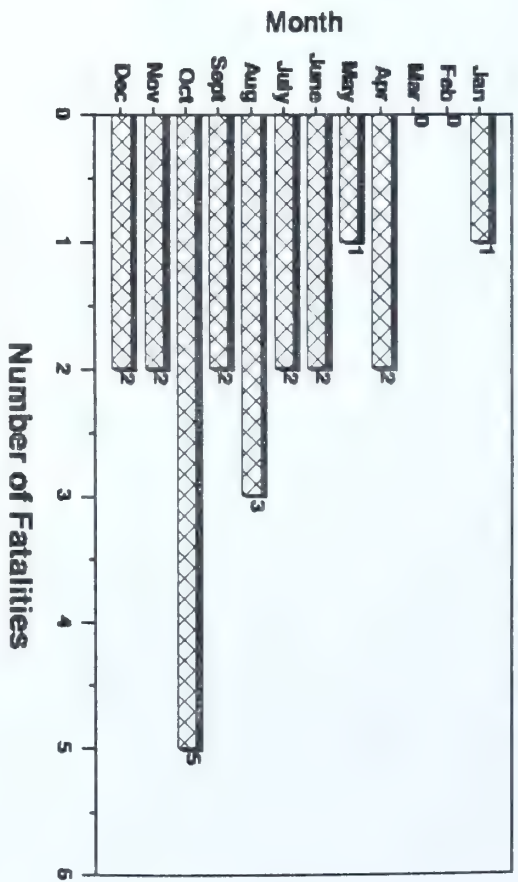
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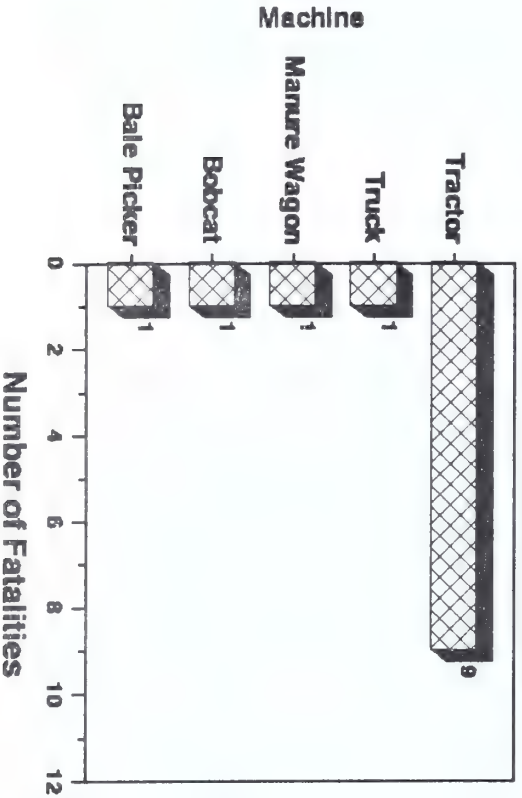
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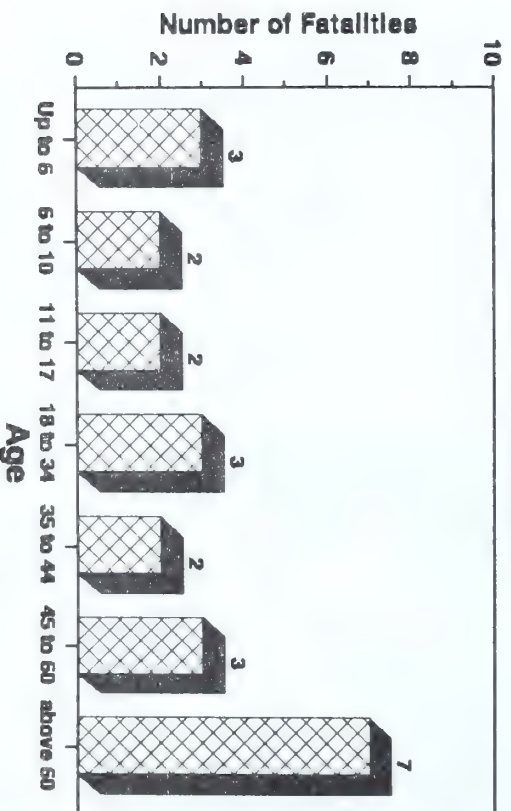
MONTH FATALITY OCCURRED



TYPE OF MACHINERY



AGE OF VICTIM



Weather, complacency factors in increased farm fatalities

Weather not only played havoc with the 1993 crop year, it also played a role in an increased number of farm fatalities in Alberta last year.

"First, wet spring weather delayed seeding, so there was a rush to get the crop in. Then, cool temperatures hindered crop maturity pushing farmers to a stressful, late harvest. Five of the deaths, or 23 per cent, occurred during that late harvest in October," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program.

"That kind of stress contributes to hurry, and hurry often results in carelessness. Even a split second can be dangerous when operating machinery," adds Kyeremanteng.

While the number of farm fatalities topped 20 for the first time in many years, the 22 deaths in 1993 was lower than figures a decade ago.

"Any increase in the number of fatalities is disturbing," says Kyeremanteng. "Because machinery-related deaths are the most frequent cause, we'll be putting increased emphasis on machinery safety during 1994."

There were 13 machinery related deaths in 1993, nine of those 13 involved a tractor. The other four machinery deaths involved a truck, a manure wagon, a bobcat and a bale picker. [See charts on page 2 for more details.]

Kyeremanteng notes a particular segment of the population is disproportionately represented in the statistics. It accounted for six of 22 total fatalities and four of the seven child fatalities.

"Because of their structure and traditions, this group is difficult to reach through traditional promotional and media campaigns," he says. "However, visits have proven effective in the past and we hope to continue them.

"As well," he adds, "the general farm population also seems to have become complacent about safety as the statistics have steadily improved over the last few years.

"Our program will continue running farm safety campaigns, and working with farm organizations and agri-businesses on injury prevention. These programs work, but with limited resources it's difficult to reach everyone. So, it's critical that farmers and farm families take on more responsibility in injury prevention and farm safety. Safety is as important as production and economics," he says.

Children and people over the age of 60 years accounted for 14, or 64 per cent, of the deaths. Seven children, aged 17 and under, died on farms during 1993.

"For me, the number of child fatalities is particularly troubling," says Kyeremanteng. "Our awareness programs only go so far, the rest must come from parents."

The farm safety program will continue spring safety programs aimed at children as well as the Child's Guide to Farm Safety, a safety unit designed for elementary school classrooms.

The 1993 Alberta farm fatality statistics were released in Vermilion in conjunction with the kick-off of a 1994 spring farm safety campaign. The "I Care Postcard" campaign is open to rural students. They are asked to create an "I care" postcard to be sent to their favorite farmer.

"We chose this northeast community for the launch and release very deliberately," says Kyeremanteng. "Over one-third of the total provincial farm deaths were in the northeast region. Those eight fatalities were twice as many as the next highest regional total."

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

Alberta cattle producers support non-refundable check-off

Alberta's cattle producers have voted to continue supporting the Alberta Cattle Commission through a non-refundable check-off.

More than 7,400 cattle producers cast votes in a plebiscite conducted by the Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council. Producers were asked whether or not they wanted to continue to pay a non-refundable check-off.

A total of 7,410 ballots were cast. The vote in favor of the non-refundable check-off was 3,876—just over 52 per cent of the total. The total vote for a refundable check-off was 3,483. There were 51 spoiled ballots. The plebiscite required only a simple majority.

"The majority of cattlemen who cast ballots wish the status quo to continue and the Alberta Cattle Commission check-off to remain non-refundable," says Cliff Downey, the plebiscite's returning officer. Downey, the former provincial Farmers' Advocate, was chosen to oversee the plebiscite.

Currently the Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) collects a non-refundable \$1.50 per head service charge from all cattle sold in Alberta. The check-off funds the provincial commission and supports diverse projects ranging from lobbying government through to beef marketing and researching industry issues.

All cattle producers were invited to one of 35 information meetings about the plebiscite. The meetings were held across the province. At each meeting industry representatives discussed the benefits and drawbacks of a refundable or non-refundable check-off.

Producers could vote immediately after the meeting, at Alberta Agriculture district offices or with a mail-in ballot. A majority of the plebiscite votes, about 4,800, were cast at the district offices.

Larry Sears, Alberta Cattle Commission chairman, says the plebiscite result is a vote of confidence in the organization's funding mechanism, structure and democratic process.

"Producers have clearly expressed their commitment to beef

advertising, the development of new markets, funding research, lobbying government, and issue and image management.

"Cattlemen and cattlemen recognize that a secure funding base is essential to having a strong voice and an effective organization working on the industry's behalf.

"We're really pleased that so many producers participated in the vote—the 7,400 producers represent a significant portion of Alberta's beef cattle industry," adds Sears.

The Western Stock Growers Association (WSGA) was one of the organizations who supported a refundable check-off. After the plebiscite vote was announced Welding Kolstad, WSGA president, said his organization accepts the plebiscite result.

"Now," says Kolstad, "it is time to get on with the work of representing the best interests of Alberta's cattle producers. We have worked hard with the Cattle Commission towards that end in the past, and will continue to do so in the future. There is no room in this industry for ill will or petty bickering, and the WSGA will do what is necessary to put this issue behind us."

The check-off plebiscite followed a court challenge of the commission's ability to collect the check-off. The Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council, the supervisory body of agricultural commissions, was asked to conduct a producer vote. The plebiscite vote ran between February 14 and March 4.

Contact: Diane Aves
427-2164

Phosphate fertilizer research yielding results

Farmers should consider adding a maintenance application of phosphate fertilizer each year to replace the phosphate removed by crops says an Alberta Agriculture soil fertility research scientist.

"Although our research is not yet complete, it is my opinion that a maintenance application of phosphate fertilizer each year will ensure good soil phosphorus levels are maintained and crops won't run short during the growing season," says Ross McKenzie, manager of the three-year study on soil phosphorus.

"Research results have clearly demonstrated that wheat, barley and canola frequently respond to phosphate fertilizer," he adds.

Phosphorus is an essential nutrient plants need to grow. Specifically it helps transfer energy, or in other words, convert the sun's energy into starches, sugars and other compounds. Phosphorus also helps plants absorb other nutrients.

Most prairie soils are naturally low in plant-available phosphorus. The benefits of seed-placing phosphate fertilizers aren't new. They were first observed in Saskatchewan in 1927. Phosphate fertilizer use became common in the 1950s and dramatically increased in the 1960s and 1970s.

The phosphorus supplying power of soils increased because of residual phosphate fertilizer notes McKenzie. "As a result, many farmers have questioned whether they can reduce or eliminate the use of phosphate fertilizer."

In 1991, Alberta researchers began a three-year province-wide phosphorus fertilizer project. It included approximately 45 research sites throughout the provinces' cultivated areas. The trials evaluated the response of wheat, barley and canola to phosphate fertilizer.

The researchers have used different soil tests to determine plant available phosphorus levels. Then, correlated soil test levels with crop response to the added phosphate fertilizer.

The information will be used to develop predictive models for each soil test method. From this, recommendations can be made about which test performs best for each crop in Alberta's different soil zones.

"The results of this work should be available for the spring of 1995," says McKenzie.

"Trial results at over 400 sites show that 84.4 per cent of wheat, 92.5 per cent of barley and 82 per cent of canola responded to added phosphate fertilizer," he notes. "An economic evaluation showed that over 70 per cent of sites responded to phosphate fertilizer at a 2:1 ratio—meaning the last dollar spent on fertilizer still returned \$2 in increased crop yield."

Both seed-placed and banded phosphate treatments were used in southern Alberta. Seed-placed phosphate produced higher yields at 33 of 55 responsive sites. Banded phosphate was superior to seed-placed at only eight of the sites, while methods were equal at the remaining sites.

Cereal crops take up to 75 per cent of their phosphorus requirements in the first 40 days after seedlings emerge. Soil phosphorus is less available to crops when it's cool and wet. These two reasons emphasize the importance of placing phosphate as close to the seed as possible.

The project research team includes John Harapiak and Norm Flore of Westco Fertilizers in Calgary. The other team members are all from Alberta Agriculture. Edmonton-based Doug Penney and Elston Solberg, of the soil and crop protection branch, and Garry Coy, soils specialist in Fairview, all worked with field trials. Dan Heaney and Len Kryzanowski of the soil and animal nutrition lab are the other team members. Heaney is co-ordinating laboratory analysis, while Kryzanowski is working with the research groups on statistical analysis.

In 1993 the project received funding from the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute, the Western Grains Research Foundation, the Alberta Canola Producers Commission, Sherritt, Cominco, Westco, and the Potash and Phosphate Institute.

Contact: Ross McKenzie
381-5126

Earlier 4-H scholarship application deadline in 1994

Current and former Alberta 4-Hers have an earlier 4-H scholarship application deadline in 1994.

"May 15, 1994 is the new deadline for anyone who is thinking of or planning to apply for a 4-H scholarship," says Arron Madson, provincial 4-H development specialist.

In past years the general scholarship deadline was July 15. Some specific scholarships had earlier deadlines. "We've moved the date up so 4-Hers will know if they've earned a scholarship much earlier than in other years. This should help them with some of their post-secondary financing options," adds Madson.

A total of 88 scholarships are available for the 1994-95 academic year. This represents over \$52,000 in scholarship monies from 42 different sponsors. "If you are currently a 4-H member or have been a 4-H member and plan on attending some form of post secondary education in the fall, get your application in now," recommends Madson.

Application forms can be picked up at any Alberta Agriculture district office, at Alberta high schools, or by writing to the provincial 4-H office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Arron Madson
422-4444

Agri-News briefs

Alberta 4-H Council has new president

Diane Maull of Metiskow is the new president of the Alberta 4-H Council. Maull was the council's first vice-president. Stepping down was Bill McGrath of Vermilion. Other executive positions have new faces. Gordon Schaber of Leduc moves from second vice-president to first vice-president. Doug Fox of Hillspring is now the second vice-president. Former treasurer Marie Logan of Lomond is now the council's recording-secretary. Gail Companion of High River joins the executive as treasurer. The 21-member council also has two new members. Norm Withers of Lavoy is a northeastern region representative and Brett Bonde of Calgary is one of two 4-H alumni representatives. The provincial council was established in 1971 and has representatives from each of the regional councils plus 4-H alumni and 4-H movement sponsors. Among its mandates is liaison with Alberta Agriculture. For more information on the council, contact executive secretary Mahlon Weir in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Goat production course at Olds College

Olds College is offering a two-day advanced goat production course April 18 and 19. The hands-on course covers obstetrics, kid rearing, selecting breeding stock, herd health, clipping, grooming, nutrition and kidding. For more information, contact Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

North West Cattle Feeders AGM April 12

The North West Cattle Feeders will hold their annual general meeting April 12 at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton. Keynote speaker is Gerald Leeper of Sparks Companies Inc. of Memphis, Tennessee. He'll discuss the changing nature of both the Canadian and U.S. beef industries as well as alternative business management tools cattle producers and feeders can use to survive and thrive in the 1990s. Updates will be presented by the Alberta Cattle Feeders Association, the Alberta Cattle Commission and Alberta Agriculture. Anne Dunford, Canfax senior market analyst, will provide a market review and outlook. Registration is \$50 per person and includes lunch. Preregistration is required by April 8 by calling Brenda at 963-5493.

Variety of equine courses offered at Olds College

Four different courses of interest to horse enthusiasts are offered by Olds College in the next months. A horsemanship and colt breaking clinic runs April 22 and 24. The course advocates teaching through feel, not fear and takes a common sense approach. Horsepack in the high country is a six-day, hands-on workshop May 2 through 7. The workshop gives practical training required to develop proper horsepacking techniques and care of related equipment. Ecology of the Rockies' eastern slopes will be

April 4, 1994



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discussed as well as outfitting basic skills. The June courses are in barrel racing and horse photography. The Marlene Eddleman barrel racing school is June 3 through 5. The school covers riding and the pattern, attitude, exercises, equipment, starting young horses, problem horses and barrel prospects. A two-day horse photography course runs June 4 and 5. The course helps participants select and use proper photographic equipment, lights and background. Also covered are posing for conformation pictures, taking action shots and dark room procedures. For more information on any of these courses, contact Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

1994 Beef Congress coming June 21-23

The third annual Alberta Beef Congress will return to Red Deer June 21 through 23. The congress includes educational seminars and hands-on demonstrations for the industry as well as consumer programs. Live-animal pens and commercial displays are also part of the three-day event. The congress is held at Red Deer's Westerner Park. For more information on the congress or to book booth space, call the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce at (403)347-4491 or fax (403)343-6188.

AGRI-NEWS

April 11, 1994

Dollar down, livestock prices up

One of the biggest challenges in forecasting livestock prices is keeping up-to-date with the latest movement of the Canada/U.S. exchange rate says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"With a two-year down trend still in full swing, further revisions to prices because of a dropping dollar are likely," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"Myself, I've had to revise forecasts based on 76 cent and 75 cent Canadian dollars and go to a 73 cent dollar," he adds.

Alberta cattle, hog and lamb producers have all benefitted from the dropping Canadian dollar relative to its U.S. counterpart. The current outlook for Canadian slaughter hogs is positive, given the downward-dollar trend. Feeder cattle prices are drawing strength from the same downward trend. With the lower dollar, lamb prices didn't slump when prices dropped south of the border.

"However," says Gietz, "There's no guarantee the Canadian dollar will keep falling throughout 1994. Nor, does anyone know just how far it might fall.

"What is known is that our dollar is approaching the bottom end of its historical trading range against the U.S. dollar. As unlikely as an increase in the Canadian dollar might seem right now, the possibility of a higher dollar later this year can't be ruled out."

In specific markets, Gietz says there's nothing in the market to suggest a feeder cattle price decline. However, the exchange rate is the most important factor to watch. "Based on current information, \$110 per hundredweight seems a reasonable starting point as a heavy feeder steer price forecast for August."

On the slaughter cattle side, Gietz forecasts Alberta direct sale steer (ADS) prices to average \$95 through April, falling off by a dollar through to July and an August average of \$90.

Canadian slaughter hog prices are expected to stay positive with the downward-dollar. As well, the U.S. countervailing duty on live hogs has been adjusted down.

"This should mean better returns for exporters," says Gietz. "But the duty level could be revised and go higher later this year."

Gietz forecasts Alberta Index 100 slaughter hog prices at \$1.55/kg in April, moving up to \$1.70 through June before falling off to \$1.50 by September.

"A lower Canadian dollar was positive for lamb prices. Otherwise, they would have decreased as did prices south of the border,"

notes Gietz. He does have a caution. "Normal seasonal patterns and ample U.S. supplies suggest current lamb prices as about as good as it gets for 1994."

Alberta prices for slaughter lambs, on a live weight basis, could gradually fall to \$70/cwt. or lower by fall.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Canola acreage on the rise

Canadian farmers are planning to seed more canola this year than they did in 1993 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Forecasts are between 12 and 14 million acres of canola will be seeded this spring. That's up from the 10.3 million acres devoted to canola in 1993.

"Given the returns on canola versus wheat and barley, as well as the carry-over of these two crops, I wouldn't be surprised if canola acreage is 12 to 13 million acres this year," says Larry Ruud of the market analysis and statistics branch.

The first acreage intention survey results will be available soon. United Grain Growers (UGG) plans to release their report on April 13. Statistics Canada's report is expected out on April 28.

While another two or three million acres is a large increase, Ruud says canola demand is expected to remain strong. November futures are holding steady between \$345 and \$355 per tonne.

"That translates into a fall delivery contract price of seven dollars per bushel plus or minus roughly 10 cents," he says. "I don't think this market will make any major moves at least until seeding intentions are available."

On the other hand, old crop canola prices remain volatile and Ruud expects them to stay that way well into summer. "Prices will be driven by the weather as well as the uncertainty over carry-over stocks," he says.

For more information on canola markets, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Contact: Larry Ruud
427-5386

Strength, surprises in special crop markets

Special crop markets have had surprising price fluctuations and strengths says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Canary seed was the most exciting special crop market in terms of volatility," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch.

Cash bids jumped from about \$705 per tonne in mid-February to over \$925 per tonne as the month ended. By the second week of March, some companies dropped their bids down to \$662 per tonne. Then, some of the same companies, increased bids by mid-March back up to \$794 per tonne.

"By all accounts it appears high prices didn't draw out large supplies of seed," he says. "Stocks seem to be very low, in sharp contrast to what official statistics would suggest."

Pea statistics are also "strange" says Dooley. The market strengthened during March. "But as with the canary seed market, there's a belief by some people in the trade that government production—and even trade—statistics are suspect.

"If the statistics are inaccurate and production was overstated, then that would help to make sense out of the surprisingly strong pea market," he adds. "Also, if old crop remains, producers should seriously consider sales into the rising spring market."

Export pea statistics to the end of December 1993 also had unexpected numbers. The 1993 pea harvest wasn't early. Reported shipments between August and December totalled 52,404 tonnes. This compares to more than 127,000 tonnes for the same period in 1992.

"The 1993 number is odd given the size of last year's crop," notes Dooley. "Hopefully, the large shipments that had been expected will show up in first quarter 1994 statistics."

In other special crop markets, both lentil and yellow mustard contracts are attractive at higher prices than last winter. New crop production contracts for No. 1 Laird and Eston lentils are available at \$375 per tonne.

Yellow mustard contracts are at \$297 per tonne for No. 1 quality. Contracts are higher than those available last year.

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

Know market for lamb profitability

The key to profitable lamb marketing is knowing what market you intend to sell to and then fulfilling that market's requirements says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Lamb producers should insure they have a market, or market access by contacting order buyers, feedlots and packers now to discuss their own marketing intentions as well as what those buyers are looking for," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"Market alternatives are very limited," he adds, "and, price discounts are significant if you don't plan your sales well in advance."

Very specific requirements are being sought by Alberta's major lamb marketer. Fresh lamb markets are Canada West Foods' target. That means the company requires lamb within a narrow grade band for the bulk of their sales.

"To their credit, the company is actively educating producers about the type of finished lamb they are most interested in and will pay a premium price for," notes Gietz.

As part of this awareness effort Canada West now offers on-farm grading services and have hired another buyer to serve producers. Producers who want more information can contact the company through a toll-free line, 1-800-363-6602.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Soil and Animal Nutrition lab changes focus

Alberta Agriculture's Soil and Animal Nutrition Laboratory is no longer accepting soil and feed samples from the public, instead it will focus on research and diagnostic work.

"After April 1 we'll no longer accept unsolicited soil and feed samples from the public," says Dan Heaney, acting director of the lab. This includes farm soil, garden soil, greenhouse media, farm feed, mushroom soil and manure analysis.

"For Alberta producers this means going to a private company and paying the analysis fee instead of paying a fee-for-service to our lab," he adds.

Routine soil and feed testing analysis is available through eight private laboratories across the province. There are three such labs in the Edmonton area, two each in Calgary and Lethbridge, and another in Brooks. [See list following story.]

"The policy change will allow us to put a greater emphasis on diagnostics and research," says Heaney. "The lab will continue to provide diagnostic services to the department's district and regional specialists. Reference laboratory services to both private and public labs will also continue.

"As well, we'll also be able to provide more specialized research support to applied research projects and technology transfer programs," he adds.

Contact: Dan Heaney
427-6261

Private sector soil and feed testing laboratories in Alberta

Brooks

Lakeside Research
Box 800
Brooks, Alberta T0J 0J0
Telephone: (403)362-3326 Fax: (403)362-8231

Calgary

A&L Midwest Laboratories (Canada) Ltd.
2443-42 Avenue NE
Calgary, Alberta T2E 8A3
Telephone: (403)250-3317 Fax: (403)250-5249

Agat Laboratories
3801-21 Street NE
Calgary, Alberta T2E 6T5
Telephone: (403)291-2428 Fax: (403)299-2022

Edmonton

Norwest Soil Research Ltd.
9938-67 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T6E 0P5
Telephone: (403)438-5522 Fax: (403)438-0396

Plains Innovative Laboratory Services
4244-91A Street
Edmonton, Alberta T6E 5V2
Telephone: (403)463-5458/462-5123 Fax: (403)462-5221

NIRA Agri-Food Research Labs Inc.
Bay #1, 1408-8 Street
Nisku, Alberta T0C 2G0
Telephone: (403)955-7861 Fax: (403)955-7877

Lethbridge

Norwest Soil Research Ltd.
Box 1900
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4K5
Telephone: (403)329-9266 Fax: (403)327-8527

Sandberg Laboratories Ltd.
Box 22
3510-6 Avenue North
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 3Y3
Telephone: (403)328-1133 Fax: (403)327-3076

1994-95 final year of Queen Mother scholarship

A scholarship honoring the Queen Mother will be awarded for the last time this year.

"The three \$1,500 scholarships for the 1994-95 academic year are the final awards," says Arron Madson, personal development specialist with Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

The scholarship was established in 1985 as a gift to the Queen Mother by the Alberta Government. Her Majesty visited Alberta in July of that year to attend the World Angus Forum in her role as sponsor of the Angus breed.

The \$1,500 scholarship is open to students enrolled in agriculture, agricultural engineering, home economics (human ecology) or veterinary science (large animal).

Leadership, academic performance and contribution to the community are scholarship criteria. "As well, only applicants with school marks over 70 per cent are considered," adds Madson. "Students in later years of study are given preference."

The scholarship is administered by Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch. The application deadline is May 15. The scholarship is open to all Alberta students, not just current and former 4-H club members.

For more information or to get an application form, please write the provincial 4-H office at: Home Economics and 4-H Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Room 200 J. G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Arron Madson
422-4444



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Agri-News briefs

Constructive factors coming in '94-95 feedgrain market

Looking ahead to next year there are some positives in the feedgrain market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "One factor is barley acreage is expected to decline, possibly as much as 10 to 15 per cent," says Larry Ruud of the market analysis and statistics branch. "Second, carry-over feed wheat stocks should decrease significantly to a more normal level between one and two million tonnes," he adds. Another factor is growing numbers of livestock, so more demand for feedgrains. Other factors include an expected strong U.S. corn prices and a higher CWB outlook for 1994-95. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Processed alfalfa exports to Japan continue

Last year Japan imported record high volumes of hay cubes and baled hay. Alfalfa pellets remained within historically "normal" levels. "Japan has been and remains Canada's largest processed forage market," says Al Dooley, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "So, obviously events in Japan are important to the Canadian industry." Baled hay exports from Canada to Japan grew modestly. Shipments totalled about 39,600 tonnes. Cube and pellet exports were down. "The decline, in part, was probably related to relatively poor quality hay in 1993," notes Dooley. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Wheat prices to depend on class

Upper grade hard red spring, extra strong and durum wheat class prices will probably drop says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The decline is in anticipation of a return to normal grade distributions along with increased durum acreage in 1994," says Matthew Machielse of the market analysis and statistics branch. However, given the low carry-over of high quality stocks, the greatest potential for price increases are in these classes. "Remaining wheat classes have less upside potential given abundant world supplies. Prices will rise, but only marginally, if there are production problems in classes such as prairie spring and soft white," he adds. Machielse advises farmers to fine-tune their wheat acreage decisions based on the 1994-95 CWB pool return outlook released on March 24. For more information, contact Machielse in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Second interprovincial soil and water conservation planning workshop

The second interprovincial soil and water conservation planning workshop will be held May 3 and 4 in Regina, Saskatchewan. The workshop is a joint project of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (Saskatchewan chapter) and the Canadian Great Plains Research Centre. The workshop is a forum to highlight activities and views on conservation planning. As a follow-up to the 1991 Edmonton workshop, the 1994 gathering will reflect a wider scope of environmental issues facing the agriculture industry. The program includes planning for conservation, wildlife, environmental liability, public lands/public good, regional/landscape basis and the human element. A special feature is a project showcase. The showcase will combine trade show and poster sessions. Four optional courses will run between May 2 and May 5. Each course is one-day long. Topics are: an introduction to the revised universal soil loss equation (RUSLE); air photo interpretation; GIS and conservation planning; and, facilitation training. The workshop will be held at the University of Regina. For more information, contact Paula Brand in Regina by calling (306)780-5457 or faxing (304)780-8229.

Stock dog clinic in Olds

Olds College is offering a stock dog clinic April 29 through May 1. Weather permitting, dogs will be worked outdoors. This will be supplemented with classroom and video instruction. Registration is limited. For more information contact Olds College extension services at 556-834.

AGRI-NEWS

April 18, 1994

Alberta food companies introduced to Pacific Northwest

Ten Alberta food companies took their products on a unique northwest passage last month.

The companies, all value-added processors, were part of a first-time marketing effort that linked them directly to major buyers in Seattle and Portland.

"Preliminary feedback from both Alberta exhibitors and the American buyers was positive. One exhibitor's rating was superb," says Dave Rous, an Alberta Agriculture trade director.

"Alberta companies received an education on the marketplace, specifically how the U.S. retail distribution system operates and how it differs from the Canadian way," he says.

"The companies also made good contacts. Some appointed brokers. Others were invited to private company trade shows and asked for sample orders. The prospects for business looks good."

The mini-trade show and team marketing effort was developed by Rous along with Paul Murphy of the Alberta Food Processors Association and Doug McCracken at the Canadian Consulate in Seattle. Their goal was to help Alberta companies move into the Pacific Northwest market, particularly the 7.5 million people in the Seattle and Portland areas.

The Alberta companies all had export-ready, or nearly ready products. "All are small or medium size, so trade shows and marketing trips would be prohibitively expensive in both time and money," says Rous. This marketing concept offered them the opportunity to meet with buyers while keeping costs down by going as part of an Alberta group.

During the four days of presentations in mid-March, the 10 companies set up table top displays plus product samples. The Alberta Made products included meat, bakery, flour, water, honey, potato, specialty and natural products. They were seen by a wide cross-section of buyers, including six brokers, one distributor, three retailers, five wholesalers and a major foodservice company. Each of the 16 U.S. buyers had a two-hour appointment to meet with the Alberta companies.

"This offered quality time as well as confidentiality compared to a large trade show," notes Rous. "As well, speciality and natural food companies were able to show their products and connect

with two major niche product buyers, Larry's Food Markets and QFC."

While the U.S. buyers met the Alberta sellers in March, the project really started in early February with what Rous calls a "market intelligence" trip. Along with Murphy and McCracken, he met with head merchandisers or buyers with key companies in the Seattle and Portland markets.

Those interviews were followed with a list of the Alberta company representatives buyers could meet with and products they would see in March. Next, a detailed package on the Alberta companies including product factsheets were sent.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

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"This was a real key to this mission's success from both the Alberta seller perspective and the American buyer," says Rous. "We were able to identify and invite the key buyers. They came because they were really interested. Our Alberta companies got to talk with the people who make the decision about buying their products."

While the mission will be evaluated again in six months and a year, already there are plans to repeat this format in other target U.S. markets.

"Joint marketing efforts, such as this one and the Alberta beef team, have yielded tremendous results. This mini-trade show devoted to Alberta food products is another way industry partnerships can make things happen," notes Rous. The Alberta beef team—with government, production association and agribusiness members—made successful presentations in target U.S. markets

"There's an enormous potential for exporting more and more Alberta food and beverage products into the U.S. and Mexico with the freer trade climate," he adds. "Letting U.S. buyers know what's available here is another very important element to our trade endeavors."

Contact: Dave Rous
427-4241

Paul Murphy
444-2272

Wind erosion always a spring risk

Despite crop residue levels as "good as they can get", there are still areas with wind erosion risks this spring says an Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist.

"The main reason wind erosion shouldn't be severe is because two years of high yields have left more crop residue to protect the soil," says John Timmermans. "So, wind erosion shouldn't be as severe this spring as it has been in recent years," he adds. "That said however, there are signs wind erosion could be problem in the spring of 1994. Certain areas do have the potential for some serious erosion between now and mid-June when new crop growth again protects fields from erosion." [See attached map of relative risk of wind erosion.]

Two risk factors are beyond farmers' control. One is their soil type. The other is weather. Although Albertans know their climate, predicting its weather is a game of chance. For example, many acres were labelled a high wind erosion risk in the spring of 1992, but the average monthly wind speeds between January and June were "lower than normal".

"You shouldn't assume that high moisture conditions will be enough protection. Generally those conditions do reduce the erosion risk, but not all of the time. The surface is what's at risk and it can dry out and become very erosion prone in a very short time if weather is dry and windy," Timmermans says.

There are two areas of relatively high risk in the province because of drought-like conditions in 1993. "Both are in eastern

Alberta, one around Lloydminster and the other north of Medicine Hat," notes Timmermans.

Other erosion risks are linked to the crop production system. In Alberta there are basically three types—summerfallow in a grain and oilseed rotation, continuously cropped cereals and irrigated crop production.

While summerfallowed acres have decreased by about 10 per cent in Alberta, more of the reduction has been in central and northern Alberta than in southern Alberta. In the south extra rainfall has brought more weeds, and as a result more tillage passes to control them. Consequently the improved residue cover has been lessened to inadequate on many fields.

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) did a residue cover survey in the fall of 1993. Up to 92 per cent of fallow fields had less than 1,000 pounds of residue cover per acre. This is less than what's needed to protect soil from wind erosion.

"A number of summerfallow fields in the south have already begun to erode this spring," notes Timmermans. "So, residue management this spring is a critical component of all field operations including seeding to prevent any further erosion."

There's also an erosion risk in some continuously cropped fields. "We usually expect continuously cropped areas to be well protected from erosion at all times," says Timmermans. "This isn't the case in Black and Grey soil zones this spring. The PFRA survey estimates over one-third of those soils have less than 1,000 pounds per acre of residue.

"Brown and Dark Brown soils generally have a high residue cover," he adds.

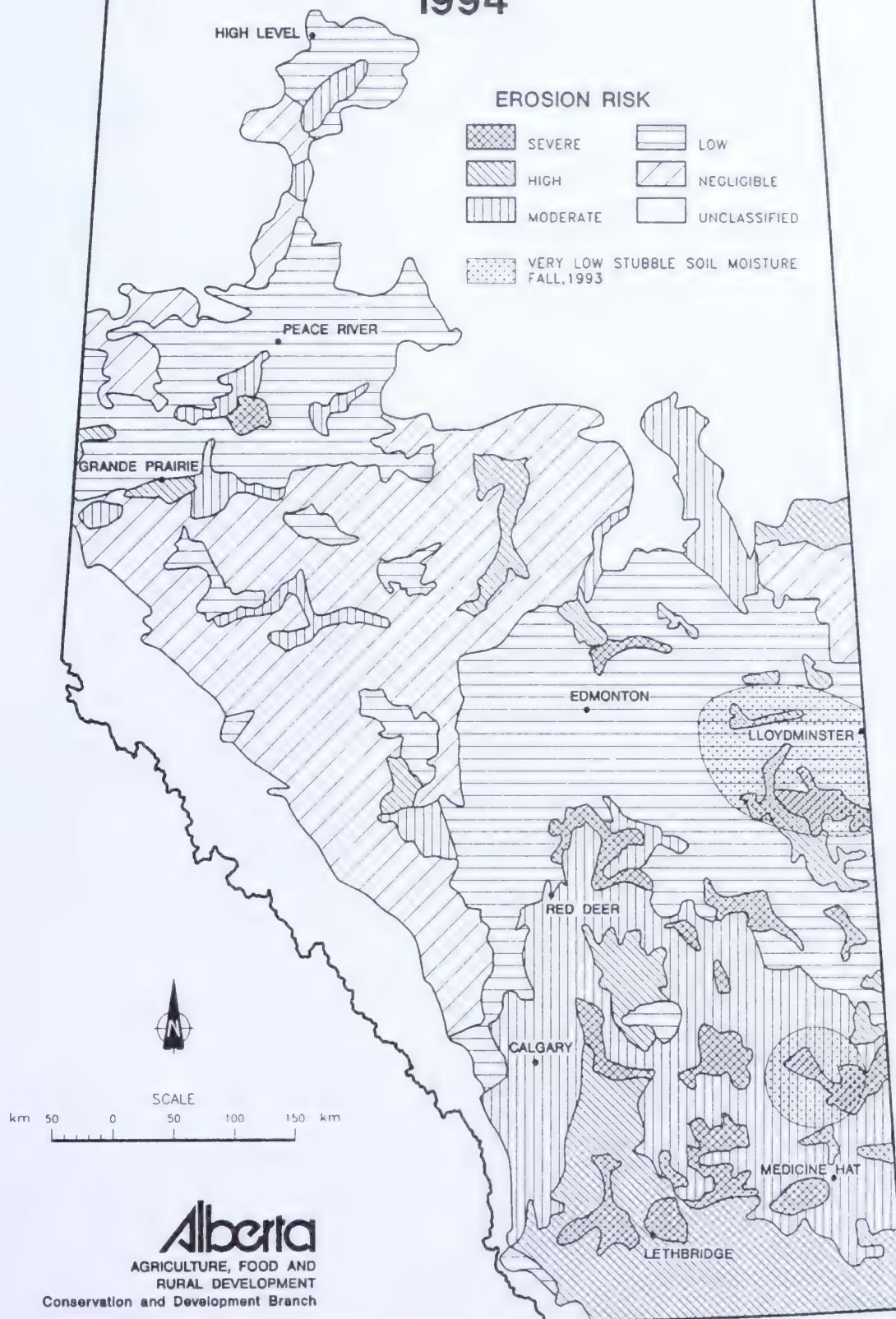
Irrigated acres often have a high erosion risk because of their sandy texture, plus most are located in windy southern Alberta. Other factors include beans and potatoes leaving little protective residue after harvest and the early, aggressive tillage needed for sugar beet production's smooth seedbed.

"A number of irrigated fields have already suffered wind erosion this spring and there's still two full months in the critical risk period," he notes.

"While the crop production systems may differ, all fields with a high wind erosion risk require careful residue management during spring work and seeding to avoid wind erosion," says Timmermans. "This caution is especially important if the weather is dry and windy."

Contact: John Timmermans
948-8539

WIND EROSION RISK IN ALBERTA 1994



March "lamb" weather welcome

March 1994 in Alberta defied the lore that when March comes in mildly like a lamb, it will roar out like a lion. All of March was warm.

"It was a welcome month of warmth following a cold, wintry start to 1994," says Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist with Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch.

The average monthly temperature for January was -14.8°C and -17.6°C in February. However, the March average was 0.5°C. These averages are based on data recorded at 43 Environment Canada climate stations across the province.

Alberta's average March temperature of 0.5°C was above the monthly normal. Locations around the province reported temperatures from three to seven degrees above normal. The warmest average temperature was at Bow Island in southern Alberta. Its 4.5°C average was 5.4 degrees above its normal.

"Even Fort Chipewyan's March average temperature of -6.9°C was 5.3 degrees above its normal," adds Dzikowski.

With the warm temperatures came less than normal precipitation. Climate stations averaged 8.5 mm of precipitation, 11.3 mm below the 1961-1990 average.

Most of Alberta received below normal precipitation except for the foothills and mountain regions. The Peace and central regions reported between five and 20 mm of precipitation, varying from 30 to 80 per cent of normal. The southern region reported between zero and 20 mm.

"Fort Chipewyan also figured in the precipitation report and was an exception to the warmer temperatures and less precipitation trend," says Dzikowski. "Its 41.7 mm was the most precipitation anywhere in Alberta during March. That total also was 233 per cent of Fort Chip's long-term average."

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Stewardship motivation for conservation

Glenn and Delmar Engelhardt are modest when asked what made them the 1994 provincial farm family conservation award winners.

"We don't do anything different than anyone else," says Glenn, the elder of the two brothers who operate individual farms south of Duffield, but share machinery and work.

Their farming practices are like their neighbors' they say. Their land has heavy clay soil and is hilly. Soil doesn't drift in the wind or wash away. As such it isn't suitable for continuous cereal cropping, but produces excellent forage crops. Approximately 60 per cent of their improved acreage is in perennial forages, primarily alfalfa. Livestock is part of their farm enterprises. Both have hogs and Del also runs a small commercial cattle herd on hilly land suitable only for grazing.

In recent years legumes have been added to the crop rotation and is one of the ways they control weeds. Pulses have enhanced soil conservation as well as livestock feed quality and the economic viability of their cash crops. Another significant change is moving from minimum tillage to direct seeding.

When pressed Del says their teamwork and willingness to try new things could be a factor in being named the 1994 Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS)/Western Producer Conservation Farm Family. "We were some of the first to try fababeans," he notes.

But more than what they do is how they feel about their land. "The land belongs to the country at large," explains Glenn. "We borrow it for 70 years or so and it's incumbent for us to leave it better than we found it."

His brother's words are different but the stewardship message is the same. "We can't just wear it out in one generation," says Del.

Their philosophy has taken them beyond their own farms. Glenn, for example, has spoken about their conservation farming practices at a number of conservation workshops. He's also a member of the County of Parkland's Agriculture and Rural Advisory Committee. Del is a long-time member of a Keephills environment committee that has dealt with moving a townsite for a large mining project.

Both have been involved with local conservation tours, crop productivity studies and a provincial cropping evaluation project. Both have also served as directors on the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation and its predecessor. Each family's community involvement is also wide-ranging.

While neither is sure any of their children will become the next generation to farm their land, their families are involved in the current operation. Glenn's wife Susan spends time in the hog barn. Their two sons, Ian, 24, and Warner, 21, are both NAIT students but also help out during busy times. As does Christie, 17.

Maivis, Delmar's wife, is also involved with livestock. For example, she takes a regular shift checking the herd during spring calving. She also runs a home-based business teaching children how to sew. Their children are younger than their cousins. Corrine is 17, Julie 15, and Richard 12.

Contact: Glenn and Susan Engelhardt
731-3782
Delmar and Maivis Engelhardt
731-2421

Making zero-till believers in the Peace

Seeing has made believers in the northern Peace. The vision came from Improvement District #22's applied research association founded in 1988. The believers are the area's farmers who have seen the research results, joined the group and changed their tillage practices.

While the change to conservation tillage is a win, the association and its members were also recognized with the 1994 Group

Conservation Award from the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) and the Western Producer.

Better known as ARA, the group was founded because local producers were concerned about the lack of agricultural research within their improvement district. Survey results told the fledging organization soil degradation was the top issue. By 1990, ARA had purchased a zero-till drill and started its first long-term test sites. ARA's research efforts have included a variety of tillage systems, peat soils, saline soils and using grasses.

Two significant things have happened to the organization during the last six years. ARA's membership doubled. Currently nearly one-fifth of the area's farmers—about 100 of 550 producers—are members, one of the highest participation rates in the province.

At the same time ARA's major push has been in zero tillage. Two of the district's producers, Rick and Henry Graw of Manning, are pioneer zero-tillers in the northern Peace region. Up to 1989, no other area farmers had converted to this type of conservation tillage. That has changed as ARA's test plots and research data has been shared through tours, demonstrations, meetings and newsletter and newspaper articles.

Garry Ropchan has been ARA's assistant research co-ordinator since 1990. Zero-till became a personal quest for Ropchan who farms himself. He credits the Graws for convincing him that zero-till worked. But, it wasn't until ARA was formed and results generated so farmers could see its advantages, that zero-till caught on.

Particularly, Ropchan says, farmers needed to see that zero-till worked in their areas. They were skeptical when presented with zero-till research results with a "Well it worked there, but will it work on my farm" attitude.

Ropchan says he has personally felt that challenge while working for ARA. "Everytime a farmer said 'Zero-till won't work for me', I said, 'Okay, let's try it'. And it keeps working."

ARA's first research co-ordinator recognized the initial skepticism reaction by putting together random, replicated plots. As a result, ARA's test plots stretch 110 miles between the most northern and most southern.

Improvement District (ID) #22 is a giant seven-shaped area in the north Peace region. It's narrow, vertical length begins just north of Grimshaw and moves up through the arable farmland as far north as Paddle Prairie. The horizontal extension goes to Alberta's western boundary.

"Our improvement district has a wide range of soil quality and types," notes Mervin Empey, current ARA research co-ordinator. "So we try to cover as many of those as possible."

ARA has also maintained its vigor by moving beyond its initial research efforts as well as its organizational boundaries. Direct seeding is one of the newest research projects. So are canola fertility, sclerotinia control and deep ripping.

As well, ARA is slated to expand north into Improvement District #23 in 1995. ID 22's neighbor surrounds it on the north and east. Number 23's boundaries cover a good portion of northwestern Alberta. However farming areas are concentrated to the immediate north (High Level) and east (La Crete, Fort Vermilion and John D'or Prairie) of ID 22. Information meetings in those areas have already turned into ARA memberships.

Contact: Mervin Empey Garry Ropchan
836-3354 836-3354

Wheatland proving poster heartland

No farming. No food. Conserve. The slogan is as austere as the poster's illustration is stark with grey soil and burnt orange sky. This combination earned Mark Janzen top honors in the 1994 provincial poster competition for National Soil Conservation Week.

Janzen, 11, is a grade six student at Samuel Crowther Middle School in Strathmore. His school is in the County of Wheatland. While neither of those facts are extraordinary, the fact he and all three of the competition runner-ups are from County of Wheatland schools is remarkable. Add in that the county's students were well represented in the 1993 contest, and the pattern becomes more than coincidental.

The county has run its own poster competition since 1989. Last year was the first time local winners were sent on to the provincial competition. Success was immediate. Three of the top four winners were from County of Wheatland schools.

For the county's agricultural service board, and particularly for assistant fieldman Russ Muenchrath, the competition is an opportunity to talk to young students about conservation issues.

Muenchrath visits elementary schools in the county. His message is for both rural and urban students. Particularly, he says, to tell "city kids" why conservation is important to them.

In 1994 he talked to classes at 13 schools. In other years he's talked about wind and water erosion and shown *Gone with the Wind—Too!*, a 25-minute Alberta Agriculture produced film about soil erosion. This year he changed his focus, moving to the relationship between cattle and soil, and used another popular Alberta Agriculture video. The Green Cow spoofs Western movies and features a stranger who comes to town and can't buy a steak.

Muenchrath's presentation concludes with explaining the competition rules. But his involvement doesn't end there. He

returns to each school with the results from the local competition. At the same time, every student who entered the contest this year received a yogurt-dipped granola bar and a Ducks Unlimited (DU) poster.

Both "prizes" reinforced the conservation message says Muenchrath. Yogurt is a dairy product from cattle. The DU posters, and the organization's sponsorship, also conveys the concept of successfully integrating agriculture and wildlife.

That follow-up gave all the students a feeling of "being winners for participating" says Jean Owens, a teacher at Wheatland's Rockyview School. Two of her grade six art students were provincial competition runners-up in 1994. Although it was the first time Owens was directly involved in the competition, Rockyview students had participated in other years and one was a provincial finalist in 1993.

This history had her students primed for the competition as well as enthusiastic. That's not always the case with poster competitions. Teachers are overwhelmed with requests every year says Owens. However, the conservation competition stood out.

One reason is because other than a restriction the posters be colored, students had the freedom to use their creative energy in their own way. As well, the presentation by Muenchrath gave them background and even new information to use. Owens also felt the competition reinforced an overall theme in her art class of students giving their art meaning.

To do that each student started with their slogan, then did their artwork. Becky Roper picked up on the cattle theme with her "Don't milk the future away". Classmate Erin Cammaert focused on stubble with "Don't let your soil fly—leave your stubble high".

While most of her class are farm kids Owens says, "All of them are rural kids because they are so intimately involved with the agriculture industry." That connection is another reason why the conservation poster competition fits well into the curriculum. Coupled with the presentation, students are given information that makes them think.

Philip Hofer, 11, of Crawling Valley school in Hussar was the other County of Wheatland student who was a provincial competition runner-up. His detailed drawing showed how soil could be "put in its place".

Contact: Russ Muenchrath Barb Shackel Hardman
934-3321 422-4385

One of the additions is part of a national Farm Credit Corporation (FCC) 4-H Scholarship Awards program. Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded annually to Alberta students enrolled in the first year of any post-secondary institution.

Scholarship awards are based on 4-H and community involvement. However, applicants also must write a 500 to 1,000 word essay. Topics are set, but applicants have their choice. For 1994 the topics are: the importance of agriculture; agriculture and the environment; or, why support rural Canada.

Applicants must be at least 16 years of age, and have been involved in 4-H for at least two years.

"This scholarship program is in addition to FCC scholarships already on Alberta's 4-H roster," says Madson. "A \$300 FCC scholarship is awarded to students in each of Alberta's 4-H regions."

There are regional criteria for each of the other new scholarships. Both are also memorial scholarships.

The Robert Sherwood Memorial scholarship is open to 4-H members from the west central region. The \$475 award was established in memory of Robert Sherwood.

"The third scholarship isn't really that new," notes Madson. "The Wetaskiwin district has awarded three scholarship to former 4-H members from that region. However, starting in 1994, one of those three will be renamed the Heather Rasmuson Memorial Scholarship."

This scholarship is valued at about \$700. It will be awarded to first year students who are past or present members in the Wetaskiwin 4-H district. Applicants will be judged on community involvement, leadership abilities, communication skills and academic achievement.

The application deadline for all Alberta 4-H scholarships is May 15. Application forms are available at Alberta high schools, Alberta Agriculture district offices and from the provincial 4-H office in Edmonton. You can write the 4-H office at: Home Economics and 4-H Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Room 200 J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Arron Madson
422-4444

Three additions to 4-H scholarship roster

Two new and one revamped scholarship are on the Alberta 4-H scholarship roster for the 1994-95 academic year.

"All of the scholarships are open to past and present Alberta 4-H club members," says Arron Madson, personal development specialist at Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch.

Agri-News briefs

Nominations sought for Beef Congress Awards

The Alberta Beef Congress is seeking nominations for three awards that will be presented during the congress in June. The award categories are: beef industry achievement; cattleman of the year; and, a forage achievement award. Nominations close on April 30, 1994. The beef industry achievement award is a lifetime achievement award to recognize an individual who has made a major contribution to the Alberta beef industry. Recipients can be from any segment of the industry including producers, researchers, academics, civil servants and agri-business people. Producers who demonstrate exceptional management skills in their own operation and provide leadership to the industry as a whole will be considered for cattleman of the year. Judging criteria include innovative production practices and production results as well as involvement in the industry and community. The forage achievement award is designed to recognize service and contributions made by an individual to the forage/beef industry. These third annual awards will be presented during the Alberta Beef Congress June 21 through 23 in Red Deer. Nomination forms are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. For more information, contact Leroy Ehnes at 340-7406 or the Beef Congress office (Red Deer Chamber of Commerce) at 347-4491.

Intensive grazing seminar at Olds College April 28

Olds College is offering a day-long intensive grazing seminar April 28. The seminar will be of interest to cattle producers who want to get more grazing units from their pasture through controlled grazing. The seminar covers much of the latest technical information on controlled grazing. Some of the seminar topics are: the principles of controlled grazing; water systems; forage species and establishing them; improving livestock feed; grazing stand increases and land enrichment through controlled grazing; and, new techniques in electric fencing. Speakers include Olds College instructors, Alberta Agriculture specialists and producer organization representatives. The registration deadline is April 21. For more information on the seminar, contact Ken Parker in Olds at 556-8235 or Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

1993 zone 2 pulse plot trials results in report

The 1993 test plot results of pulse crop trials in zone two are now available in a report. The trials were a Farming for the Future on-farm demonstration project. The 1993 plots were located in Lacombe and Vermilion. Plots tested pea varieties, field pea response to phosphorus fertilizer and weed control. Copies of the report are available at Alberta Agriculture central and northeastern district offices. For more information, contact Neil Miller in Lacombe at 782-3301.

Shearing and wool handing for the novice

Olds College is offering a two-day shearing and wool handling course for novice sheep producers with limited experience. The course will run May 14 and 15 at the college. Course topics include equipment, hands-on shearing, animal rotation, preparing fleece and shearing technique. The \$95 course fee includes lunch. For more information, contact Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

Devonian Botanical Garden offers variety of courses

The University of Alberta's Devonian Botanic Gardens offers a wide-range of horticultural and horticultural-related courses. The botanical garden is located 5 km north of Devon, approximately a half-hour drive from downtown Edmonton. Late April courses include composting on April 20, low maintenance gardening on April 21, design and construction of Japanese gardens for three Thursdays starting April 21 and growing oyster mushrooms on April 24. There is a fee for all courses. For more information on registration fees and on the Devonian's complete range of courses, call 987-2064 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays.



3 3286 50528 2075

U of A bull sale April 29

Yearling bulls raised at the University of Alberta's Kinsella ranch will be offered for sale on April 29. The sale will be held at the university's cattle research station near Ellerslie. The yearling bulls are from three synthetic lines developed through 33 years of selective breeding, research and culling. Sale bulls can be inspected anytime up to noon on sale day April 29. The sale starts at 1 p.m. The sale location is two miles west of the Highway 2 and Ellerslie corner traffic light, then 3/4 of a miles south. For more information, contact Steve Melnyk in Ellerslie at 988-5462, or Gary Minchau in Kinsella at 336-3528 or 336-2388.

New APPDC chairman named

Jurgen Preugschas is the new chairman of the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation (APPDC) board of directors. Preugschas is a hog producer and purebred breeder from Mayerthorpe. He succeeds Jim Smith of Innisfail who retired from the board after serving the maximum six-year term. There were also other changes on the board. Director Ken Rempel of Tofield is now board vice-chair and director Roger Charbonneau of St. Lina was named to the executive committee. Three new directors were added to the board following the late March elections. All replaced retiring board members. Hog producers voted for directors and delegates in four of the nine APPDC districts. Former board chair Smith was replaced by Gary Shaw of Lacombe in district four. In district two Doug Hall of Airdrie replaced Burt Jorgenson. District six needed a second meeting to elect Jack Kalisvaart of Gibbons to replace Paul Smith. The special meeting broke a tied vote between candidates, a first time APPDC occurrence. APPDC directors and delegates are elected for two-year terms and can serve a maximum of three consecutive terms. Producers in even-numbered districts vote in even-numbered years, while odd-numbered districts vote in odd-numbered years. For more information, contact Ed Schultz, APPDC general manager and chief returning officer at 474-8288.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

April 25, 1994

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Soil test to check nutrient levels

Nutrient levels appear to be down in fields across the Prairies which makes soil testing very important for a good crop in 1994.

"Available nitrogen levels are close to zero in most stubble fields this spring and fallow fields are also low in available nitrogen in many parts of the province," says Dan Heaney, acting director at Alberta Agriculture's Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory.

One private company analyzed literally tons of soils from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta last fall. "We expect to see the same trend this spring as we saw in the fall—nutrient levels are down compared to previous years," says Doug Keyes, an agrologist with Norwest Labs in Edmonton. [See table.]

"This means farmers will need more fertilizer for the coming crop, but soil tests are the only way they can determine exactly what and where they'll need that fertilizer," says Heaney. "The department's Soil and Animal Nutrition Laboratory no longer accepts soil samples from the public. However, there are a number of private companies who will do soil analyses."

Nitrogen and phosphorus are the main nutrients that have decreased notes Keyes. "The decline is related to weather and fertilizing practices," he adds.

Relatively good—moist—growing conditions in 1993 resulted in higher than normal yields and greater nutrient removal rates through much of Western Canada. Wet soils this spring will increase nitrogen losses through denitrification. Wet soil can also cause nitrogen leaching below soil test depths.

"Many producers have also reduced their fertilizer inputs in response to lower crop prices during the last few years," says Keyes. "Phosphate fertilizers are generally the first to be reduced because the effects aren't as immediate as when nitrogen is reduced."

"Eventually though, the phosphorus needs to be replaced or yields will suffer," he adds.

Contact: Dan Heaney Doug Keyes
427-6361 438-5522

Table 1 – Average Soil Test Values by Soil Zone for the Past Three Years (0 - 6" depths only)

Soil Zone	Phosphorus (ppm)			Nitrate-N (ppm)		
	'91	'92	'93	'91	'92	'93
Brown	20.9	19.0	15.7	16.1	7.6	6.8
Dark Brown	22.5	23.6	21.1	13.6	11.2	8.6
Thin Black	26.1	26.9	23.8	15.8	17.0	10.0
Black	21.8	22.3	21.8	16.5	16.0	12.4
Dark Grey	23.9	23.7	21.1	19.1	17.3	11.3
Grey Wooded	21.9	22.5	22.6	11.7	13.2	9.5
Peace	18.4	18.4	18.0	11.4	15.3	8.2

Source: Norwest Labs.

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Focus on direct seeding experiences

Time saving is the most important gain for a group of southern Alberta farmers who direct seed their crops.

Two regional soil conservation co-ordinators brought together two focus groups, totalling 15 farmers, from the Airdrie and Nanton areas to talk about their direct seeding experiences.

"Direct seeding is a very hot topic all over Alberta right now," says Rob Dunn, regional co-ordinator based in Lethbridge. "Our aim was to get some grassroots background from farmers about their direct seeding experience and add to our knowledge base."

Dunn and his counterpart in Airdrie, Scott Meers, brought together experienced direct seeders to identify their key production practices and analyze direct seeding's cost effectiveness.

All 15 of the group farmed in similar crop growing areas. Almost all—13 out of the 15—used an air delivery seeding system of some sort, ranging from air drills to cultivator-mounted air seeders.

"By far and away the most important facet of direct seeding to this group was time savings—up to 15 minutes per acre," notes Meers. "Multiply that savings over a 4,000 acre farm and the time saved is 1,000 hours."

The benefits do extend beyond the time savings, although some of the advantages are related to time. Less tractor time translated into reduced maintenance and reduced wear and tear on power units. As well, these farmers found their air seeding systems had a longer life than conventional equipment.

"Air seeding equipment stood up to the demands of direct seeding much better than we had predicted," notes Dunn. "Those farmers are getting twice the length of useful life from air seeding equipment than what's expected for many of the heavy duty conventional drill systems."

Direct seeding has also improved these farmer's soil quality. "All have seen their soil tilth improve significantly," says Meers, "They rated seedbed quality, in terms of both moisture and soil quality, as excellent."

Switching to direct seeding does change production practices, such as depth of seed placement, weed control and handling crop residues.

Residue management is the most critical practice in the success of direct seeding. It starts with good straw and chaff spreading behind the combine.

"Farmers found good straw and chaff spread prevents plugging problems at seeding and helps avoid weed and germination problems," says Dunn. Harrowing substituted for tillage also helps manage the residue. "With good timing, aggressive harrowing can break up the straw," notes Meers.

Some critics have pointed to cool seedbed temperature as a problem. Due to improved soil moisture in the surface area the direct seeders were able to seed shallow where the soil is warmer. "In the final analysis, their seeding date was very similar to or even earlier than their neighbors," says Meers.

Weed control is different, too. Farmers who use low soil disturbance observed much less weed growth. However, most relied on tillage during seeding to control weeds, followed by normal in-crop herbicide treatment.

"Total herbicide costs were similar to average herbicide costs for the area," says Meers. "There was also a shift in importance from annual weeds such as wild oats and broadleaf weeds, to perennial weeds such as quackgrass, Canada thistle and toadflax. Many have had success with pre-harvest Roundup for perennial weed control."

"Direct seeding also has its challenges," says Dunn. "Farmers who direct seed must be careful to prevent pest problems—weeds, diseases and insects—by monitoring their fields and using appropriate crop rotations."

Alberta farmers can learn more about direct seeding at the series of demonstration days across the province. [See separate story this issue.] They are in Donnelly on May 31, Killam on June 2, Fort Saskatchewan on June 7 and Strathmore on June 9.

Meers also recommends the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) Conservation Farming Guide and the Saskatchewan Direct Seeding Manual as further sources of information.

Contact: Rob Dunn Scott Meers
381-5119 948-8512

Direct seeding days coming across province

Alberta farmers can see direct seeding equipment in action and learn more about this conservation practice at one of four demonstrations days around the province between May 31 and June 9.

The direct seeding field days will be May 31 in Donnelly, June 2 in Killam, June 7 in Fort Saskatchewan and June 9 in Strathmore. Up to 13 pieces of direct seeding equipment from various companies will be demonstrated.

"Besides the equipment demonstrations, each site also has some other special features," says Michelle McKinnon, an Alberta Agriculture conservation agrologist who co-ordinated provincial planning.

The Peace region's program starts on May 30 with an afternoon direct seeding seminar and trade show at the Guy-Donnelly Sportex. The demonstration day, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 31, will feature chaff spreading equipment along with direct seeding equipment.

The Donnelly event is hosted by the Smoky Applied Research Association (SARDA). For more information, contact Jeanne Bisson at 837-2211.

Killam's demonstration day on June 2 will take place on a site 11½ miles south of Killam on Highway 36. The site is on the west side of the highway. Events run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, contact Sean Sheedy at 384-3537.

"At the Fort Saskatchewan and Strathmore field days, farmers will not only see direct seeding equipment in action, but will also be able to view plots preseeded a month earlier, by the same equipment," notes McKinnon.

The Fort Saskatchewan site is one mile northwest of the city at the intersection of Highway 15 and Secondary Highway 825. The trade show site is located 1/2 mile northeast at the Alberta Wheat Pool. The June 7 event starts at 10 a.m. with equipment demonstrations beginning at 1 p.m.

In addition to the field demonstrations, there will also be sessions on straw/chaff management and seed/fertilizer boot openers. Also located at the site are barley/canola variety plots and fertilizer placement trials. For more information, contact Inga Weber, field technician of the Sturgeon Soil Savers Society at 436-6496.

Strathmore is the final demonstration day on June 9. The site is four miles west of Strathmore on Highway 1, then one mile north. Or, two miles east of the junction of Highway 24 and Highway 1, then one mile north.

Chaff/straw spreading will also be featured at Strathmore.

"Organizers also plan to have a direct seeded alternate crops plot and fertilizer placement plots," notes McKinnon.

For more information on the Strathmore demonstration day, contact McKinnon in Airdrie at 948-8512.

These direct seeding days are presented in partnership with the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS), Conservation 2000 and the Canada/Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (CAESA) agreement. Alberta Agriculture, local research groups, municipalities and a variety of private sector companies are also project sponsors.

Information is available from local co-ordinators, Alberta Agriculture district offices and McKinnon in Airdrie.

Contact: Michelle McKinnon
948-8512

Kitscoty 4-Her top speaker in '94

Becky Mitchell of the Kitscoty 4-H Beef Club is the newest member of a select group—a winner of the provincial speaking finals.

Mitchell was one of 14 top 4-H members from across the province who qualified for the recent competition in Calgary. All progressed through at least three levels of competition to reach the 1994 provincial final.

Each finalist had just over a week to research the chosen topic of "forever young" and prepare a four to six minute speech. Mitchell titled her speech, "Think young, be young".

The competition also includes a shorter impromptu speech. Mitchell spoke to "leadership...the ticket to success".

Nathan Eshpeter of Daysland placed second in the competition. His theme speech was "Yes, it can be done", and his impromptu

answered the question of whether schools should have a year-round system.

"Communications training is emphasized in the Alberta 4-H program. Competitive public speaking is one option," says Arron Madson, provincial 4-H personal development specialist.

The 1994 provincial 4-H public speaking finals was sponsored by the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede and Alberta Agriculture.

Contact: Arron Madson
422-4444

Moisture affects soil salinity

While above-average soil moisture is good news for the often dry south, excellent moisture usually increases soil salinity problems says an Alberta Agriculture soil salinity specialist.

"Saline seepage has always expanded after a period of above-average soil moisture," says Don Wentz. "However, good moisture conditions can also have a beneficial effect on salinity."

The Counties of Lethbridge and Warner are the most likely areas for salinity increases in the next months he adds. Snow melt could expand potential saline areas in other southern municipalities as groundwater levels rise.

Groundwater levels are monitored by Alberta Environmental Protection. Joe Marciniuk, of that department's technical services and monitoring division, tracks groundwater levels across the province through a series of groundwater monitoring wells.

Marciniuk compared the 1993 year-end readings to the 10-year average. He found wells in the Del Bonita and Milk River areas are from one and a half to almost three metres above the 10-year average. Barons and Lethbridge area wells were about one metre above the decade average. Wells north of the TransCanada highway were close to the 10-year average, but snow melt would bring their levels to their peak.

"While producers in this area may have to deal with increased salinity, the extra moisture can also help cure their salinity problem," says Wentz.

Research data has shown that above average soil moisture results in increased yield on recharge areas. Above average moisture conditions also improves yields in saline areas because of the improved growing conditions.

Years with above average moisture are also good years for establishing saline controls says Wentz. "Alfalfa will establish more quickly and more easily in wet years, but you have to know where your saline seeps are and what type they are in order to control them."

Contact-type saline seeps are caused by local groundwater flow systems and have a recharge area. These recharge areas can be from three to five times the size of the saline seep. Alfalfa is often recommended to control deep groundwater in contact-type saline seeps. Flex cropping—which includes alfalfa in the rotation—is also often recommended to control deep groundwater in saline seeps.

**April 25, 1994**

"All saline seeps should be planted to a salt tolerant grass," says Wentz. "Again because salinity creates drought-like conditions for growing plants, a wet year is a better time to establish a grass stand."

For more information about saline seeps and how to control them, contact your regional forage specialist, municipal agricultural fieldman or Wentz in Lethbridge at 381-5153.

Contact: Don Wentz
381-5153

Agri-News briefs

Report describes land systems in the County of Vulcan

A report and map describing the County of Vulcan's land systems has been published by Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. The project compiled, updated and standardized soil and landscape information for use in land degradation, land management and land use planning as well as targeting resource conservation and extension activities. With the soils and landscape information, the county can better understand land degradation and agricultural production, and direct effective programs to serve local needs. The report can also be used for farmland assessment, in environmental planning, and by others interested in the land resource. The map presents a record of the distribution by area, of the land systems within the County of Vulcan. Land systems are broad planning units which have a recurring pattern of landform, soil, vegetation and water patterns. "These land systems fit into larger units used for provincial and national classification," notes Leon Marciak, soil conservation specialist. Funding for the project was supplied by the Canada/Alberta Environmental Sustainability Agreement (CAESA) as part of a soil inventory program. For more information, contact Marciak in Edmonton at 422-4385.

is sponsored by Parkland Savings and Credit Union. There is also class prize money up for grabs. Entry fees are \$100 per pen of three and the entry deadline is June 7, 1994. Contact the Alberta Beef Congress at 347-4491 or Lorne Erickson at 748-3138 to enter.

Statistical handbook now available

The twentieth edition of the *Canadian Grains Industry Statistical Handbook* is now available for sale from the Canada Grains Council. The book includes more than 260 pages of tables in nine sections. The sections include: Canadian and international production, domestic processing, trade, prices, handling and transportation, livestock, farm cash receipts, temperature and precipitation, and census information. It is a one-source reference of statistical data designed specifically to meet the needs of educators, analysts and executives in the grain industry. Copies of the handbook are available for \$36.50 plus postage and handling (\$2.50 Canada/ \$7 elsewhere), plus GST. Write to: Canada Grains Council, Suite 760 - 360 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3Z3 or phone (204) 942-2254.

Pen of three competition at 1994 Alberta Beef Congress

Organizers are looking for entries to a pen of three yearling replacement heifer show being held in conjunction with the third annual Alberta Beef Congress in Red Deer on June 21 to 23. The heifer show will be held at 3 p.m. on June 22, and will feature 20 pens of three. Both commercial and purebred replacement heifers are eligible to compete. Entrants will be vying for over \$3,000 in prize money. The Alberta Wheat Pool has put up \$1,000 in prize money for the grand champion. The reserve grand champion will take home \$500. The reserve championship

Charolais breeders to host first-ever conference

The stage is set for the Canadian Charolais Association (CCA) to host the first-ever Charolais World Technical Conference (CWTC) in Calgary, this July. The conference, slated for July 15 to 24, will include live animal demonstrations, technical sessions, Charolais shows (one being the Calgary Stampede World Charolais Show), herd tours, evening barbecues and entertainment. A special event will be the CCA 35th Anniversary Party on July 24, in the Alberta foothills. For more information on the technical conference contact the Canadian Charolais Association, 2320 - 41 Ave. N.E., Calgary, Alberta T2E 6W8 or phone 250-9242.

AGRI-NEWS

May 2, 1994

CANADIANA

MAY 23 1994

Farm Management Initiative calls for proposals

The Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative (FBMI) is now accepting project proposals for development and delivery of farm management training.

"Approximately \$1.3 million is available for training Alberta farm managers between now and March 31, 1995," says Anita Lunden, the FBMI provincial co-ordinator.

The deadline for proposal submissions is June 10, 1994.

Project proposals should fall under one of three categories: farm business management training, program development and testing, or training the trainers.

Under farm business management training, funding will be considered if proposed activities are directed at persons engaged in the management of a farm and enhance farm business management capabilities.

"Subject matter can address any area of managing a farm operation," says Lunden. "This year special emphasis is being placed on helping farmers manage risk and uncertainty."

The program development and testing category has also been identified as a high priority. Projects involving the development of innovative farm business management training techniques will be considered for funding.

"We are looking for projects involving the development and testing of concepts, instructional techniques and delivery methods that can be used by trainers and counsellors," notes Lunden. "We are also encouraging research based projects—research into farm use of modems and databases, for example."

Under the training the trainers category, activities must be directed at persons engaged in the development and delivery of training.

"The purpose of this funding is to enhance the ability and expertise of individuals involved in farm business management training," Lunden adds.

Proposals are being accepted from: government; private sector companies and agencies; individuals with experience in management, farming and/or consulting; educational institutions; farm organizations; and, groups of farmers.

Now in its third year of operation, FBMI is designed to increase the competitiveness of Alberta's farmers through the expansion of their management skills.

"FBMI sponsored management courses and consulting programs are designed to expand the skills of our farmers. The courses attracted approximately 4,000 participants in each of the past two years," says Lunden. "And we are now finding that about 40 per cent of those who take part are repeat participants."

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Anyone interested in submitting a proposal for the 1994-95 project year should contact Lunden in Olds at 556-4278 for application forms and guidelines.

Contact: Anita Lunden
556-4278

Evolving into cost-effective conservation

Howard Hutchinson and his son Rod have experimented with tillage practices and equipment modifications to find economic and effective conservation measures.

"It's been quite an evolution," says Howard. An evolution that has resulted in soil conservation, better yields and the 1994 Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS)/Western Producer Conservation Farm Family Award for southern Alberta.

The Hutchinsons farm near Skiff, southeast of Taber, on a 16-quarter section family farm plus 10 rented quarters. Rod and his wife Ruth have two children, Jason, 18, and Trista, 9. Howard's wife, Gladys, is the bookkeeper for Hutchinsons Farms Ltd.

When they began managing the family farm in 1972, the Hutchinsons had a 50/50 rotation of wheat and black summerfallow. Howard once worked for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and knew that bare land could suffer serious soil degradation. So, their first crop was straight cut to help control erosion. Straight cutting also reduced their cash inputs. That was the start of a promising trend.

Participation in the South 40 Conservation Association, formed in 1988 through the Alberta Pool's Conservation 2000 initiative, has been especially helpful says Howard. "I saw that Conservation 2000 was going to be a real good thing for the farms. I've been involved with it ever since."

Howard was the association's first president and the Hutchinsons have participated in the association's tillage trials since 1988. Information from these trials is helping them assess production differences between conventional fallow, chemfallow and blade fallow as well as the economics of recropping. As a result, they're changing how they farm.

"We've switched to continuous cropping and minimum tillage on about half the farm," says Howard. Even on the land not yet converted from a 50/50 rotation, they do as much stubble retention as they can.

This includes using blades, some spraying and chemfallow. By keeping the soil covered, they control erosion and salinity. Test plots show they are getting a 10 per cent yield advantage.

The evidence for erosion control is clear explains Howard. "Many farmers in the area turned their soil absolutely black last year, leaving hardly any trash at all. When high winds hit a few weeks ago, there was a terrific amount of wind erosion. My neighbors deposited about an inch of topsoil on about 150 feet of my stubble. Fortunately I had very little that blew."

The Hutchinsons' erosion protection came from stubble and from a cover of volunteer grain. "Last fall we had quite a bit of volunteer grain growing on our fields. We elected to let it winterkill rather than work it up. That really helped keep the soil in place this spring."

They have developed and modified equipment to better meet their needs. For instance, they weren't satisfied with packing options for their air seeder so they designed and made their own packers. Their results: cost savings, excellent crop emergence and reduced wild oat problems.

Howard says he's learned a great deal from other conservation farmers. "I've watched what they're doing, and talked to them and copied a lot of what they're doing." He's learned while he's been part of a producer panel to share his own experiences in soil conservation. "You can learn a lot from listening to producers who are working in this. You can get some good ideas and change your way of thinking once in a while."

All the Hutchinsons are deeply involved in many aspects of community life in Skiff and Foremost. Gladys is active in the Regional Planning Commission, Foremost Recreation Board and Foremost Library Board. Rod is on the Skiff Hall Board and belongs to the Foremost Fish and Game Association and the Southern Alberta Outdoorsmen Association. Howard has been involved with many groups including the Foremost Flying Club, the County of Forty Mile Water Task Force, an advisory committee for the Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (CAESA) Agreement and the Skiff Water Users Co-op.

Contact: Howard and Gladys Hutchinson at 867-2171
Rod and Ruth Hutchinson at 867-2285

Cooling off soil degradation hot spots

Farm resource management planning is helping a Beiseker area farmer cool down some soil degradation hot spots.

With measures ranging from shelterbelts and chemfallow to straight cutting, John Richter is controlling pockets of erosion and salinity on his 2,200-acre farm.

Richter and his family recently received the 1994 Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS)/Western Producer Conservation Farm Family Award for south central Alberta. John, his wife Jeanette and their three children, Mike, 20, Nicole, 18, and Steven, 14, operate a mixed farm with a 30-sow farrow-to-finish operation and 4,400 laying hens.

Richter developed his farm resource management plan about two years ago. The planning process involved assessing farm resources and finding ways to manage these resources with sustainability in mind. Richter worked with the Municipal District of Rockyview and provincial soil conservation specialists. Using air photos they identified potential trouble areas for soil degradation. Then, they developed a conservation plan with special attention to the hot spots.

Richter is gradually implementing the plan. For example, he's already reduced tillage on most fields and uses chemfallow on summerfallow fields. With straight cutting for taller stubble heights, he's improved erosion control and enhanced snow trapping.

On erosion-prone fields, Richter is establishing perennial forages. Forages not only anchor the soil against erosion, they also increase organic matter and reduce the potential salinity problems. Some forages, such as alfalfa, can also add nitrogen to the soil.

Another key strategy is reduced field size. Richter converted 160-acre fields to 80-acre fields by adding shelterbelts. The smaller field size generates conservation benefits without sacrificing convenience in field operations.

Shelterbelts produce many positive effects from reducing wind erosion and wind damage to crops, to increasing soil moisture by trapping snow and reducing evaporation. They also provide wildlife habitat and travel corridors.

Richter's shelterbelts are a combination of green ash and caragana. Both are hardy, drought-resistant trees. By combining the two, he gets greater height than from caragana alone and better snow trapping than from green ash alone. To date, he has established over two miles of shelterbelts and has plans for more.

These changes will help Richter to conserve soil and soil moisture; both important factors in the long-term sustainability of his family farm.

Richter belongs to several conservation associations including ACTS, the Conservation 2000 Group in Beiseker and the R2C2 Club (the umbrella group for C2000 clubs in south central Alberta). He's also working with Boy Scouts on shelterbelt establishment and maintenance to help the next generation understand the value of soil conservation.

The Richters take part in many Beiseker community activities including the Beiseker Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club and the local school board.

Contact: John and Jeanette Richter
947-3814

Saving soil, water and money makes a winning combination

Direct seeding has saved two Fairview-area farmers both labor and fuel, while conserving soil and improving soil moisture.

"With direct seeding, I find we can net more on fewer acres," says Neil Boyd who farms with his father Jim.

The Boyd family is the winner of the 1994 Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS)/Western Producer Conservation Farm Family Award for the Peace River region. They grow grains and oilseeds as well as pasture and forage for their cattle operation on about 1,900 acres. Neil and his wife Ruby have three children, Amanda, 12, Curtis, 10, and Jay-bo, 8, who are a big help on the farm.

Jim has practised soil conservation for many years. He began using minimum tillage in the early '70s and was one of the first in the area to adopt direct seeding. "I followed along his lines — sometimes reluctantly," laughs Neil, "but it seemed to work!"

"We went totally to direct seeding about three years ago partly because of labor," he adds. "We never did a lot of tillage. Then, when Dad and I decided to farm without any hired help, he suggested we try direct seeding. It's worked really well. It saves on labor, fuel and machinery depreciation. We seed about 1,400 to 1,500 acres and put on about 100 hours with the tractor." They also find their tractor pulls the air seeder more easily and seed placement is much better.

Direct seeding has also improved soil moisture conditions on the Boyd farm. Moisture infiltration was often poor on their heavy clay soil, especially when they worked the soil in fall and spring.

"With direct seeding, you've got a lot of organic matter in your topsoil, so it acts like a sponge," says Neil. "Now after a heavy rain, our low spots aren't filling up with water. The high ground is taking in water so it's not all running off to the low areas." With better infiltration, crops seem better able to hold their own on soil moisture during dry years.

Neil feels direct seeding could even play a role in sustaining rural communities. "With direct seeding, farmers can raise a family while farming fewer acres." If more people would do that, he says, the bigger farms with fewer families trend—that's so hard on communities—could be halted.

In years when heavy stubble is a problem, the Boyds clip the stubble using a swather travelling diagonally to the normal seeding pass. The airseeder then spreads the clipping swath during seeding the following year.

The Boyds also use oscillating harrows on fields with very heavy residues. "Sometimes we'll get a mat of crop residue that hugs the ground in the spring. That mat can really cause problems with equipment plugging. The oscillating harrows break up the mats."

They are adding more forages and pasture for better soil conservation and would like to introduce field peas into the forage component of the rotation. Field peas would increase the silage protein and add nitrogen to the soil.

To reduce herbicide dependence, the Boyds use problem weed areas for silage. "I started doing that a few years ago on land that's pretty dirty, especially with wild oats and other weeds like toadflax. Whether they're weeds or not, they make good feed. We direct seed barley in the spring without spraying and then we take all the plants off in early August. That controls annual weeds. By fall, the perennial and winter annual weeds have really started to grow so we can get good control by spraying between half a litre and a litre [per acre] of Roundup.

"I really enjoy walking out on the land," he adds. "It looks and feels healthier. It even smells more alive. And we find there's more wildlife on it—ducks, partridges, coyotes hunting mice. And of course with less labor, you have more time to spend with the family, and maybe even some leisure time."

Jim and Neil are both active in local agricultural groups. Neil has been a member of the North Peace Forage Association since 1982 and was president from 1988 to 1990. He is also a member of the Fairview Applied Research Association and was president in 1993-94. Jim is a member of the Fairview Agricultural Society, the Agricultural Service Board of the MD of Fairview, and the Fairview Holistic Resource Management Club.

Contact: Neil and Ruby Boyd Jim and Vera Boyd
835-4474 835-4467

Irises can brighten up your flowerbeds

You can create a rainbow of colors in your flowerbed by planting the poor man's orchid—the iris says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Iris is a Greek word meaning rainbow," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "And the Greek definition is quite fitting as they come in a wide variety, a rainbow of colors."

Irises grow from rhizomes or thick stems just below or at ground level. The roots grow from the lower surface and grow very deep. As a result, they prefer a deep bed with well prepared soil that is reasonably fertile.

"Dig the bed deep and incorporate a 5-20-20 fertilizer at a rate of 1 kg/10 square metres," recommends Barkley.

New iris rhizomes can be planted in the spring. Place the rhizome so it is just below the soil surface—any deeper and it may become diseased or might not bloom. Planting methods can include: planting singly; planting three in a circle, radiating outwards; or, planting more than three for an even more dramatic effect. Space individual rhizomes 20 cm apart. Clumps should be 45-70 cm apart.

Dividing irises will keep them producing lots of flowers. Over grown plants are best divided in July or August. Dividing and replanting later in the year can result in insufficient root growth and heaving from the ground during the winter.

Generally, Bearded Iris need to be dug and divided every three to four years, while Siberian Iris can be divided every eight to 10 years.

When dividing irises, Barkley suggests cutting leaves 10-15 cm above the ground, forking the entire plant out of the ground and washing it with a hose. Then, with a sharp, clean knife, cut the clump into 10 cm long sections with a fan of leaves attached. Discard any decayed roots or rhizomes.

"Cuttings from the outside of the clumps will be more vigorous and best for planting," says Barkley. "Let the cuttings dry overnight. Then replant and water well."

To maintain healthy irises, dead leaves should be removed and plants should be checked for signs of disease in the spring. Apply 5-20-20 (1 kg/ 10 square metres, cultivate it into the soil and water well. Remove the faded flowers so next year's growth will

be vigorous. Weeds should be controlled by pulling or hoeing. In the fall, cut the leaves back to 15-20 cm from the ground and remove all dead leaves.

Irises are commonly grouped by their flowering type and height. The Bearded or German Iris have a thick line of fine, strikingly contrasting hairs that emerge from their throat and lower petals. The plants vary in height from 15-100 cm tall. They do best in full sun with good soil drainage. Shade causes them to be less vigorous.

The Siberian Iris is less showy. It is 60-120 cm tall with flowers that range in color from white to pale blue and purple. They like a partial to full sun location with even soil moisture. This iris lends itself well to a naturalized setting and despite looking fragile, stands up better to wind than the Bearded Iris.

The Yellow Flag Iris is a great addition to perennial borders and along side water gardens. Its 90 cm plants produce yellow flowers in June. This iris is easily propagated by division.

More information is available from Shelley Barkley at 362-3391. Another source of information is the new *Alberta Horticulture Guide* which is being sold by Alberta Agriculture for \$3 plus GST. It contains recommendations on what to grow in Alberta. It covers flowers, trees, lawns, ground covers and vegetables. The 89 page pocket book is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Dugout pumping equipment available

Even with all the snow Alberta received this winter, people in some parts of the province will still need to make use of dugout pumping equipment to ensure an adequate supply of water for the upcoming year says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The dugout pumping program was designed to provide producers with a method to move water a few miles from a source to a dugout," says Darcy Fitzgerald, an agrologist with the engineering services branch. "Under the program, producers are able to rent pumping equipment for both domestic or livestock water supply needs during times of drought or other adverse water shortage situations."

Fitzgerald notes that all necessary repairs have been made by engineering services in Lethbridge and the equipment is on its way out into the regions.

Producers will be faced with some new rental fees for the period of April 1 to September 30. The new unit rate is up from \$300 to \$400 per day. A unit consists of one pump and one trailer of pipe (one mile of six inch pipe). Each additional pump costs \$75 per day and each additional trailer of pipe is rented for \$125 per day. A high capacity pump and one mile of eight inch pipe is available at a cost of \$800 per day.

A late fee of \$100 will be charged to all applications received after October 1.

For more information on the dugout pumping program, contact Alberta Agriculture's district offices or the engineering services branch in Edmonton at 427-2181.

Contact: *Darcy Fitzgerald*
427-2181

Agri-News Briefs

Conservation workshop proceeding now available

The proceedings from the 1994 Conservation Workshop are now available. The workshop, *Moving to Sustainable Agriculture*, was held in Edmonton on January 16 to 19, 1994. It was attended by 556 people. Participants included: producers, agricultural service board members, agricultural fieldmen, industry representatives, university staff members, college students, and federal and provincial agriculture officials. The proceedings is a 241 page publication. It is available at no cost from: Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Conservation and Development Branch, Room #206, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6—phone 422-4385 or fax 422-0474.

Sheep meetings planned

Anyone interested in information on sheep production might consider attending two upcoming association meetings. The Tri-County Sheep Producers Association is holding a meeting on Wednesday, June 1, 1994 at the Thorhild Agri-Plex (upstairs). The meeting gets underway at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call Pat or Doug at 398-2305 or Mike at 398-3993. The Mountain View Sheep Producers Association is holding its regular monthly meeting on Monday, June 6, starting at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Olds Provincial Building. All sheep producers are welcome to attend. For more information, contact Joanne at 224-3026 or Mike at 224-3743.

Range management course offered

The 4th Stockmen's Range Management Course is being held in Cypress Hills, Alberta June 13 to 15. The course emphasizes practical principles and skills for the management of livestock on prairie and foothill rangelands. Francis Gardner of Mt. Sentinel Ranch at Nanton will be the keynote speaker at a fireside gathering the first evening. He will discuss the future of the range livestock operation in a changing world. The course is being offered in a range camp setting and registrants are asked to bring their own recreation vehicle, trailer or tent. The course fees are \$75 per person, \$120 per couple and \$15 per child. Camping fees, meals on day two and three, and the pre-course readings are all included in the course fee. The course is sponsored by the Southern Alberta Grazing Association and Alberta Agriculture's public lands branch. The course has space available for approximately 70 participants. For more information contact Brenda Chmielewski or Barry Adams at public lands in Lethbridge by calling 381-5486.

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AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

May 9, 1994

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Record setting prices for feeder cattle

Western Canadian feeder cattle markets remain extremely strong, in most cases setting new record highs for this time of year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Heavy feeder cattle traded at fully steady prices during the peak March-April period, at least partly because of a further weakening in the Canadian dollar," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

He notes that current heavy feeder steer prices are about \$10 per hundred weight (cwt) above last year's high level and nearly \$20 cwt above the five-year average for late April.

"Heavy feeder steer prices are high, but the real action is in the spring grass cattle and breeding stock markets," notes Gietz. "Following good returns from summer grazing last year, buyers are eager to pay top dollar for limited supplies of good, light-weight feeders."

Market averages on lighter weight classes are almost \$20 cwt above levels from a year ago. Exceptional light steers have traded as high as \$1.60 per pound.

"Bred females and cow-calf pairs are trading at previously unheard of levels—up to \$1,800 for pairs," says Gietz.

Feeder markets in the U.S. are not nearly as buoyant. Following a string of losses last fall, U.S. feedlots have become increasingly reluctant to bid on replacement feeders. Uncertainty over the 1994 corn crop and downward-trending live cattle futures have not helped the market.

"As a result of weaker feeder cattle demand south of the border, Alberta feeder cattle exports to the U.S. during the first three months of 1994 were half the volume of last year and well below the peak marketings of 1990 and 1991," says Gietz.

Gietz sees a combination of tight supplies and active demand keeping the Western Canadian feeder cattle prices strong through the spring and summer.

"The value of the Canadian dollar is the wild card that could affect prices in either direction. A lot of market watchers are betting that the slide of the loonie is not over yet," says Gietz. "At this point, feeder cattle price prospects still appear very favorable for the fall of 1994."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Support for private irrigation development continues

Privately licensed irrigation projects will continue to receive financial assistance through the Alberta Private Irrigation Assistance (APIDA) Program says Alberta Agriculture's Deputy Minister, Doug Radke.

"Funding to APIDA in the 1994-95 budget year has been reduced from \$500,000 to \$250,000 in keeping with the Government's overall restraint program, but the program will continue to help producers," adds Radke.

The reduction in program funding will mean reduced assistance grants.

"All eligible program applications received after February 24, 1994 will be reimbursed the lesser of 50 per cent of the costs of eligible capital works to a maximum of \$100 per new irrigated acre, or \$30,000 per farm unit," says Brian Colgan, irrigation and resource management division director. "The maximum used to be \$150 per acre."

Installation of proper metering systems is still a requirement under the program. Reimbursement of up to 75 per cent remains unchanged. In addition, required engineering work will still be reimbursed at 100 per cent. However, engineering reimbursements are now included in the \$30,000 per farm unit maximum.

Capital assistance continues to apply only to work required to divert and bring water from a source to the edge of an irrigated field. In-field irrigation systems do not qualify for funding.

"Since the program began, April 1, 1989, 100 projects and more than 12,000 irrigated acres have been developed," says Colgan. "These projects are located throughout Alberta—from the semi-arid southeast corner to the previously drought-stricken northeast region, and up in the Peace Country."

Radke describes APIDA as another example of Alberta Agriculture's commitment to producers and diversification.

"Approximately 20 per cent of the irrigated land in Alberta, a quarter of a million acres, is a result of private irrigation projects. I'm pleased that the program will continue," says Radke.

Contact: **Brian Colgan**
422-4596

Doug Radke
427-2145

Stop Dutch Elm disease

Dutch Elm disease has not yet been found in Alberta and that's just the way we would like to keep it says an Alberta Agriculture technician.

"We need the public's help to control the spread of Dutch Elm disease, North America's most destructive disease of wild and planted elms," says Jim Beaver of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "Everyone can do their part by not bringing firewood from other provinces or states, back to Alberta."

To remind travellers of the dangers of transporting firewood, several specially marked bins will be set up at Travel Alberta information centres. The bins will also provide a place for disposal of wood. Bins will be located at the Lloydminster, Walsh and Crowsnest Pass information centres. Also, Canadian Customs will not be allowing firewood into Alberta through any point of entry.

Dutch Elm disease is caused by a fungus and is spread by two species of the elm bark beetle. The beetles, 2-3mm long, live and breed under the bark of elm trees which may be infected with the disease. Adult beetles carry the sticky Dutch Elm disease fungus spores to uninfected trees when they fly to feed or breed. Beetles usually travel only 100 metres to feed, but may travel 5km to breed.

"The fungus grows from spores and spreads wherever the tree's sap takes it," explains Beaver. "The fungus grows in the elm's water-conducting vessels, blocking water flow and eventually killing the tree."

Young trees can be killed in a few weeks while larger, older trees take one to two years. Once infected, trees almost always die. Old, stressed or weakened trees are most vulnerable.

An early indication of infection is the sapwood under the bark changes to a dark brown or black color. This staining is most easily identified in twigs and branches. Disease control authorities should be contacted to confirm infection.

More than half of the 70 million landscape elms in the U.S. and millions of elms in Eastern Canada have been killed by the disease. The damage first occurred in Ohio in 1930. It has since spread throughout almost the entire range of elm trees on the continent. The disease was found on the Canadian Prairies in 1975.

"The disease cost more than just the loss of the trees," says Beaver. "Tree removal and disposal is expensive and real estate prices can be affected by the loss of trees and landscape damage."

Elm trees in the Lloydminster, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Brooks, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge areas will be marked with green tree ribbons during the month of May.

Beaver says, "The ribbons will remind people of the importance of elm trees in Alberta and raise awareness of the threat of Dutch Elm disease. The only cure for the disease is prevention."

For more information on Dutch Elm disease prevention, identification, tree removal and replacement, and legislation contact the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks at 362-3391.

Contact: **Janet Feddes-Calpas**
362-3391

Farm Safety Challenge game available

If you want to teach your family about farm safety and have some fun at the same time, Alberta Agriculture's Farm Safety Program has a game for you.

"A new set of Farm Safety Challenge cards has just been printed and we are now making them available to the public," says Jacqueline Galloway, a farm safety program consultant. "And the great thing about it is we've combined the eight new challenge cards with the eight existing cards and put them into a handy new folder."

Galloway notes that the folder makes the Farm Safety Challenge a nice, neat package. Also included are instructions on how to play the game two different ways—as individuals or in teams.

The game is based on the television show, Jeopardy and was first released in January of 1993. The challenge cards each feature 10 safety answers and questions. Each card deals with a different topic—machinery, tools, chemicals, transportation, anhydrous ammonia and statistics, to name a few.

"One great thing about the Farm Safety Challenge is the whole family can play the game. With a little ingenuity—offering multiple choices—even the youngest children can play," adds Galloway. "The game tends to generate extra discussion on safety issues which is also great."

Samples of the challenge cards and folder can be viewed at Alberta Agriculture's district offices. They are available at no charge through the farm safety program. All requests must be directed to: Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Farm Safety Program, 2nd Floor, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6 or phone 427-2186.

Contact: *Jacqueline Galloway*
427-2186

Growing asparagus is another option

Asparagus has the same amount of vitamins A and C as tomatoes and it's low in calories says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The two most common varieties are Mary Washington and Viking," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "Both of these varieties are good for canning and freezing."

Asparagus can be started from seed or the crowns. The crowns can be purchased at one year of age. To start plants from seed, soak the seeds for 48 hours at a temperature of 31°C. Plant into a prepared soil, 8-13 cm apart in rows. The rows should be 46-61 cm apart. The seed should be placed 4 cm deep.

Select a well-drained site for planting, where it will not interfere with the annual crops. A full sun location with deep, rich soil is

ideal. The addition of well-rotted manure or compost may be necessary.

Barkley suggests mixing asparagus seed with radish seed to help mark the rows.

The following spring, dig up the one-year-old crowns and discard weak plants—those with pointy buds and spindly roots. Then, plant the strong crowns, buds up, in furrows 15 cm deep and 30 cm apart. The furrows should be 1.2 metres apart.

Spread out the roots in the bottom of the furrow and cover with 5 cm of well-firmed soil. Keep filling in the furrows as the shoots grow until the furrows have been filled level.

Barkley notes that seed can also be planted in its permanent position. Sow into a 15 cm deep furrow, placing the seed 2.5 cm into the soil. Place four seeds per 30 cm, with the furrows 1.2 metres apart. Thin the plants to one every 30 cm in the row and gradually fill in the furrow.

She also suggests fertilizing early with 34-0-0 at 2 kg/100 square metres of row, and then again after cutting with 1 kg/100 square metres. Fertilizer can be broadcast and then watered in, or it can be placed in the trench, 5 cm deep and about 30 cm from the row.

The crowns should be top dressed every second year with 5 cm of well-rotted manure. The ferns should be watered during the summer to ensure a vigorous plant for the following season.

A limited amount of spears can be harvested in the third year if seed was planted or after the second year if one-year-old crowns were used. When the spears are 12-20 cm tall, cut them just below the ground or snap them off at ground level. They can be harvested for two weeks. In following years harvesting can be done for three to four weeks or until the shoots are less than 13 mm in diameter.

"Plan to harvest twice a week—more often if the weather is hot," says Barkley.

After the harvest, let the stalks grow into ferns and leave them standing to trap the snow. This will protect the crowns during the winter. Before the spears start to grow the following spring, the plot can be disced.

A 15 metre row, containing 35 plants, should yield 7 kg of spears by the third year. Harvested stalks should be kept moist and cold—in a fridge crisper. Under proper conditions they should last a week in storage. Freezing asparagus should be done as soon after harvest as possible. Asparagus can be enjoyed raw or steamed.

The maximum yield occurs five to nine years from planting. After that production begins to decline and gardeners will want to consider replanting.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Agri-News Briefs



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Water publication available

The spring edition of *Prairie Water News* is now available in Alberta Agriculture's regional and district offices. The publication is dedicated to protecting and improving rural water supplies. It is published on a semi-annual basis and is co-sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, the Saskatchewan Research Council, Sask Water and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration. This issue features articles on livestock and water from dugouts, grass carp and aquatic plant control, groundwater management and removing iron from domestic water.

National Gardening Month

The Canadian Garden Council has designated May - National Gardening Month. Gardening is one of the quickest growing leisure activities in North America. A Gallop Poll taken in the U.S. indicates gardening is the number one leisure activity. Betty Vladicka, Alberta Agriculture's horticulture development officer, says gardening, as a leisure activity, is also in the top five in Canada. In Alberta alone, the value of production of the horticulture industry in 1992 was \$47 million, up from \$34 million from 1991. Canada's nursery industry produces live plant materials with a farmgate value exceeding \$375 million dollars. That equates to a retail value exceeding \$4 billion. The nursery industry also employs approximately 10,000 people across the country.

Livestock evaluation seminar planned

The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede's livestock judging committee, in co-operation with the Canadian Charolais Association, will be holding a livestock evaluation seminar on June 5 to 8. Dr. Chris Skaggs of Texas A & M University will lead the seminar. He will be assisted by Dr. Scott Schaake of Kansas State University and Dr. Joel Cowley of Texas A & M University. The seminar will cover live steer to carcass relationship, a grading system comparison, the use of expected progeny differences (EPDs) in beef cattle, selection criteria for replacement heifers and herd bulls, and the use of ultrasound in carcass evaluation. Field trips to several purebred operations and a packing plant are planned. Registration is limited to 30 students and the tuition fee is \$214. For more information contact: Joan Cool, Agriculture Administration, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, Box 1060, Station M, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2K8 or phone 261-9316 or toll free 1-800-661-1260.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

May 16, 1994

JUN 27 1994

Federal meeting welcomed by Alberta

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Walter Paszkowski says he is pleased that the federal government is now directing its attention to the problems in Canada's grain industry.

Paszkowski was responding to a federal announcement calling for a meeting of grain industry officials to discuss grain marketing and transportation issues.

Paszkowski is particularly pleased that Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister Ralph Goodale appears to be willing to address the causes of the problems facing the grain industry, rather than just the symptoms.

"Mere tinkering with the grain handling and transportation system is no longer good enough," said Paszkowski. "I look forward to action being taken and trust that this initiative will not be another long, unproductive process."

Paszkowski hopes the agenda will also deal with Alberta's recently released report suggesting reform of the grain marketing system of Canada, and the way grains are bought and sold in Canada. On March 23, 1994, Alberta provided Goodale with a copy of the report, entitled "The Canadian Wheat Board and Wheat and Barley Marketing" and requested a review of the role and mandate of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB).

The proposed reforms would allow any producer or grain company, including the CWB, to buy and deliver both wheat and barley in North America. However, the CWB would retain its monopoly for sales to off-shore markets. The report also calls for a change in the method of payment under the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA) by eliminating payment to the railways and making payment to farmers, and altering the car allocation system.

"The essence of the proposal is to move away from a regulated and administered system to one which is market based and allows for competition among grain companies and transportation services," said Paszkowski.

"This report is an essential component of a more comprehensive document dealing with issues, problems and possible solutions facing the agriculture industry that I plan to release later this summer," added Paszkowski. "The intent is to consult with

Alberta farmers on this document and arrive at a comprehensive approach to solutions for consideration by federal and provincial ministers of agriculture."

Copies of the report, "The Canadian Wheat Board and Wheat and Barley Marketing" can be obtained by calling the Policy Secretariat of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development at (403) 427-2417.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus
427-2137

C.D. Radke
427-2145

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Consort 4-H member receives Premier's Award

A 17-year-old high school student from Consort is the 1994 recipient of the Alberta 4-H program's highest honor.

Julie Hadwin was chosen as the Premier's Award winner from 123 of the province's top 4-H members who attended a weekend of personal development group interaction.

During the annual three-day provincial 4-H Selections program in Olds, April 30 to May 2, delegates participated in activities designed to improve leadership and life skills. This year's theme was "the heart of the matter".

Hadwin was selected from a group of finalists known as the Ambassador Group. The 1994 group includes: Kristy Mastel, Bow Island; Travis Shand, Cremona; Kim Denis, Lacombe; Kathi McCarty, Vegreville; Colin Strauss, Edmonton; and Krista Lubeck, Worsley.

Hadwin says she is excited to be named recipient of the 31st annual award. "It is a great honor to represent Alberta 4-H." As one of her responsibilities she will represent Alberta at the National 4-H Conference in Toronto in November.

For the last seven years Hadwin has been an active member of the Consort Multi 4-H Club. As well as holding executive positions in her club, she has participated in various regional and provincial 4-H activities. In addition to 4-H, Hadwin is involved with her local church and other youth groups.

Roy Brassard, MLA Olds-Didsbury, presented Hadwin with the award trophy on behalf of Premier Ralph Klein and the Government of Alberta. In addition, Brassard extended greetings and congratulations to the other participants and award recipients. The many sponsors of the 4-H program were also recognized by Brassard. Hadwin will officially accept her award from Premier Klein at a later date.

Hadwin succeeds Wendy Williams of Gibbons, who received the Premier's Award in 1993.

Trip awards to 65 delegates were also announced at the awards breakfast on May 2. The chosen 4-H members will represent Alberta at major educational programs and tours throughout Canada and the United States over the next 12 months.

Alberta 4-H members, 16 years of age and older, can participate at Selections. Members are evaluated throughout the weekend to determine their eligibility for trip awards. The process includes points from their yearly 4-H diaries, a current events/4-H examination, peer evaluation and group interaction assessment by leaders.

Selections is organized by the home economics and 4-H branch of Alberta Agriculture. It is sponsored by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Alberta Wheat Pool Ltd., United Grain Growers and Alberta Agriculture.

Contact: Julie Hadwin
577-2122

Marguerite Stark
948-8510

Conference examines new opportunities under GATT and NAFTA

Producers, processors, agri-businesses, investors and marketers looking for new opportunities under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will want to attend the New Realities, New Opportunities Conference in Camrose, June 15 and 16.

"If you want to capitalize on GATT and NAFTA, you should attend this conference," says Garnet Altwasser, conference chair, Agriculture and Food Council (Alberta). "Our conference speakers, in combination with a number of bearpit sessions, will offer a great deal of insight into GATT and NAFTA – the opportunities presented, how our competitors are responding, how the way we do business is going to change and what we have to do to increase our competitiveness in world markets."

The conference is being sponsored by the Agriculture and Food Council (Alberta), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Alberta Agriculture.

The conference begins with registration and an evening program on June 15. Invited speakers include: Ralph Goodale, federal minister of agriculture, and Jim Dinning, provincial treasurer. Samples of foods and beverages made in Alberta will also be showcased.

June 16 will feature a full day of speakers and bearpit sessions.

Dr. Tim O'Neill, senior vice-president and deputy chief economist with the Bank of Montreal, will discuss trends in the global economy and how they will impact Canadian industries.

Ambassador Julius Katz, who served as deputy U.S. trade representative from 1989 to 1993, will make a presentation on the nuts and bolts of the Uruguay Round - GATT94. He will also offer his thoughts on the legal aspects of the agreement.

Canada's political and legislative directions in response to GATT and NAFTA will be featured in a talk by Bill Miner, trade consultant and senior research associate for the Centre for Trade Policy and Law in Ottawa. Miner will also share his observations on the agreements' practical implications for Western Canada's agriculture and food industry.

Dr. Larry Martin, chair of the Canadian Agri-Food Competitiveness Council, professor of agricultural policy and research chair of the George Morris Centre at the University of Guelph, will discuss how Western Canada's industry can be more competitive.

How business can become and remain competitive will also be the focus of David Fardy's presentation. Fardy is the senior vice-president of Cavendish Farms, a large Canadian potato processing firm with markets in the U.S., Mexico and the Pacific Rim.

Five bearpit sessions will focus on emerging market opportunities and practical ways to be more competitive under GATT and NAFTA. Sessions will be held on dairy and poultry, livestock and

livestock products, grains and oilseeds, horticulture and special crops, and specialty processing. The goal of the sessions is to have each participant outline a strategy for their business. This will be done through group discussion, consultation with the advisors and individual work.

The conference fee is \$125 per person. It includes registration, the reception, conference materials, meals, a follow-up summary and the GST. The registration deadline is June 8, 1994. To register or for more information, contact: GATT/NAFTA Conference, Policy Secretariat, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, #301, 7000 - 113 St., Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6 - Phone (403) 427-2417 or Fax (403) 427-3005.

*Contact: Evelyn Shapka
(403) 427-2417*

Summer employment program remains popular

The 1994 Summer Farm Employment Program (SFEP) is sure to have a full compliment of participants as over 300 applications were received during the first five days following the announcement of the program says an Alberta Agriculture program co-ordinator.

"We are faced with the same situation every year. We accept a certain number of applications and we are always full long before the application deadline. This year we are accepting approximately 540 applications with a deadline of May 20th," says Beverly Pearson. "The program is very popular and we always end up with a waiting list of applicants."

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Walter Paszkowski, and Advanced Education and Career Development Minister Jack Ady announced the \$400,000 program on May 2.

"Agriculture continues to play an important role in Alberta's future," says Paszkowski. "It makes sense to provide opportunities for our young people to work on a farm and learn more about the industry."

"This program reflects our government's priority on promoting educational and training opportunities for the youth of our province," says Ady.

SFEP provides fulltime farmers with assistance to hire young Albertans during the summer. The employees must be 15 to 24 years of age and farmers are not allowed to employ family members. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The program runs from July 4 to August 31.

"Farm safety is an important part of SFEP," notes Pearson. "With that in mind, there are two wage support options under the program. Employees who attend an orientation seminar, provided by Alberta Agriculture, qualify for a 50 per cent subsidy to a maximum of \$330 per month. Those employees who do not attend the seminar qualify for a 35 per cent subsidy to a maximum of \$230 per month."

Seventeen seminars have been scheduled throughout the province. They will be conducted by Solomon Kyeremanteng and

Eric Jones of Alberta Agriculture's Farm Safety Program. The seminars will begin at 12:30 p.m. with registration and will end at 4:30 p.m. All employers and employees who have been accepted to the program will be notified by mail as to which seminar they should attend.

Seminars are being held: July 4, Provincial Building, Lacombe; July 4, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, Edmonton; July 5, Courthouse, Stettler; July 5, Heritage House, Evansburg; July 6, Provincial Building, Olds; July 6, Alberta Agriculture District Office, Camrose; July 7, Wheatland County Inn, Strathmore; July 7, Provincial Building, Vegreville; July 11, 1 - 1015 - 30 St. S.W., Medicine Hat; July 11, Provincial Building, Fairview; July 12, Agriculture Centre, Lethbridge; July 12, Provincial Building, Valleyview; July 13, Legion Hall, Vulcan; July 13, Provincial Building, Smoky Lake; July 14, Provincial Building, Lacombe; July 14, Provincial Building, Westlock; and, July 15, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, Edmonton.

For more information, contact Beverly Pearson or Janette McDonald Adam, program co-ordinators at 422-5672.

*Contact: Janette McDonald Adam or Beverly Pearson
422-5672*

April weather was warm and dry

The warm weather of March continued throughout the month of April says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The average monthly temperature for March was almost a degree above normal," says Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist. "And the average temperature in Alberta for April was 5.2 C, 1.3 degrees above normal."

Bow Island had the highest monthly average temperature of 8.1 C. The coldest average temperature for April was recorded in Fort Chipewyan. Of 43 Environment Canada climate stations in Alberta, Fort Chipewyan was the only station to report a below average normal temperature - an average of -1.6 C.

While temperatures were above normal, provincial precipitation averages were below normal.

"With the exception of the far north, Alberta received below normal precipitation during April," notes Dzikowski.

High Level reported 30.8 mm of precipitation and Fort Chipewyan reported 66.6 mm. The precipitation in Fort Chipewyan was the most reported for April and represents over three times the long-term average.

The Peace and central regions reported 3 to 10 mm of precipitation, varying from 10 to 50 per cent of normal. The southern region reported zero to 30 mm, zero to 75 per cent of normal.

*Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385*

Agri-News Briefs

Beaverlodge beekeepers' field day planned

The 41st Annual Beaverlodge Beekeepers' Field Day will be held on June 10 at the Beaverlodge Research Centre. Research highlights, along with commercial and beekeeping displays will be part of the field day program. Researchers and provincial apiarists will be featured as guest speakers during the afternoon portion of the program. For more information, contact Don Nelson at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Box 29, Beaverlodge, Alberta T0H 0C0 or phone 354-2212.

International conference visits Lethbridge

The National Farm and Ranch Business Management Education Association is holding its annual conference in Canada for the first time. Association members are mainly college and technical school instructors who do extension and training work with farmers. They will meet on June 12 to 16 in Lethbridge. The conference theme is "Partnerships - Working Together for a Brave New Future". The conference will feature several guest speakers, tours, business meetings and social events. Conference topics will include: the importance of partnerships on a local, national and international basis; how Canadian beef, dairy and grain industries differ those of Canada's close trading partners; trade and transportation issues in Canada and the United States; and, how partnerships can help educators do a better job. For more information contact John Whitehead at 320-3313 or John Calpas at 320-3311.

General meeting planned

The Alberta Forage Council will hold its general meeting on June 22 at the Westerner Exposition in Red Deer. The meeting will be held during the Alberta Beef Congress which runs June 21 to 23. For more information about the Alberta Forage Council general meeting, contact Laurel Aitken in Beaumont, Alberta by phoning 929-2019.

Agricultural Institute of Canada holds annual conference

Regina will play host to the 1994 annual conference of the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) July 10-14. The theme of this year's conference is "Changing land tenure: Who owns the farm?" One portion of the conference, a plenary session on July 11, will see guest speakers discuss environmental and social aspects of the changing face of land ownership in Canada. For more details or registration information, contact Brenda Heald, Communications Co-ordinator, AIC, 151 Slater St., Suite 907, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H4 or phone (613) 232-9459. During the AIC conference a symposium on sustainable cropping – implications of crop residue management and conservation tillage will also be held. The symposium will be held on July 13 and 14. There are two registration options. Those attending can register to attend the symposium when they register for the AIC conference, or it is possible to register for only the symposium. The registration fee for the symposium is \$60. Registration is limited to 300 people and preregistration closes on June 30. For more information on the symposium, contact Jim Moen, PFRA, 603 - 1800 Hamilton St., Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4L2 or phone (306) 780-5132.

Spruce Meadows holds successful sale

The 4th Annual Spruce Meadows Auction of Select Alberta Breeds featured record prices, more than 250 accredited buyers and thousands of interested horse enthusiasts. The event included: "The Evening of the Horse", April 29; the Western Performance Horse Auction, April 30; and, the Sport Horse Auction, May 1. A total of 52 horses were sold at the two sales for a gross of almost \$360,000. The western performance Quarter Horses sold for an average of \$4,800. The high selling horse, from Anderson Ranch at Pincher Creek, brought \$9,700. The Sport Horse Auction saw six consignments sell for over \$15,000 each. The high selling horse was a Hannoverian gelding from Attache Stable at Millarville. The gelding sold for \$26,000. Buyers attended the sale from throughout Canada and the United States, as well as Mexico and the Orient.

Coming agricultural events notice form

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in June or later in 1994?

1. Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by May 25, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Publishing Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
Fax: (403) 427-2861

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News.
The next edition will be printed June 6, 1994)

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AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

JUL 26 1994

May 23, 1994

Soil moisture levels are improved

On a provincial scale, spring soil moisture levels are among the best since surveys began in 1988. Even with the dry spring weather there is potential for average or above average annual crops in most areas says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The spring soil moisture survey shows moisture levels improved noticeably over the winter in central and northern Alberta," says soil moisture specialist Allan Howard. "Most areas of central Alberta and the southern Peace River region, which were dry last fall, have gained roughly 50 mm of moisture reserve."

Favorable snowcover and snowmelt conditions appear to have provided enough moisture to create moderate moisture reserves in both areas.

The soil moisture survey has four levels of moisture: high, subsoil moisture beyond 75 cm; medium, subsoil moisture to about 45 to 75 cm; low, subsoil moisture to about 45 cm; and, very low, little or no available water below 15 cm. (See map)

Soil moisture levels were low in 21 per cent of Alberta's agricultural area. The largest areas of low moisture reserves are found in south central Alberta and the central Peace River region. The south central area extends from Calgary, northeast through Hanna, to Sullivan Lake, and southeast through Brooks to Suffield. The central Peace River region extends from Spirit River through to Manning.

"These areas didn't change from last fall," says Howard. "An analysis of the south central area shows it has had low or very low moisture conditions at least 80 per cent of the time since 1988. Therefore, dry conditions can't be considered unusual."

Other low moisture areas include: from Cooking Lake to Lloydminster and into Saskatchewan, pockets north of Valleyview, Lac La Biche, Barrhead-Thorhild, Hardisty, Drayton Valley, Delbourne and Onefour in southeast Alberta. Most of these areas were in the very low category last fall.

He explains that where moisture areas are low, reserves are sufficient for early growth, but crop growth cannot be sustained for more than a few days during maximum growth periods. Timely and adequate precipitation is required to prevent yield loss from moisture stress.

Soils with medium moisture levels were found in 52 per cent of the province's agricultural area. High moisture areas represented 27 per cent. Both the medium and high categories have sufficient reserves to withstand moderate to severe dry conditions. Given normal growing season temperatures and precipitation, average to above average crops can be expected.

High moisture levels were found in most areas west of Highway 2, and south of Township 12 in southern Alberta. Pockets were also found from Wetaskiwin southeast to Coronation, and in the High Level area. Medium soil conditions dominate the remaining areas.

"Dry weather during March, April and early May is reducing moisture levels in the seedbed," says Howard. "Some farmers are concerned that seeded crops may not be able to use the better reserves below."

The driest seedbeds are in fields worked several times this spring. Those with minimal or no tillage still had good seedbed moisture as of May 1, although they were drying out as the dry weather continued.

"Seedbed moisture changes quickly and spring showers can replenish surface moisture," Howard says. "If showery or rainy weather develops the situation could turn around in a day."

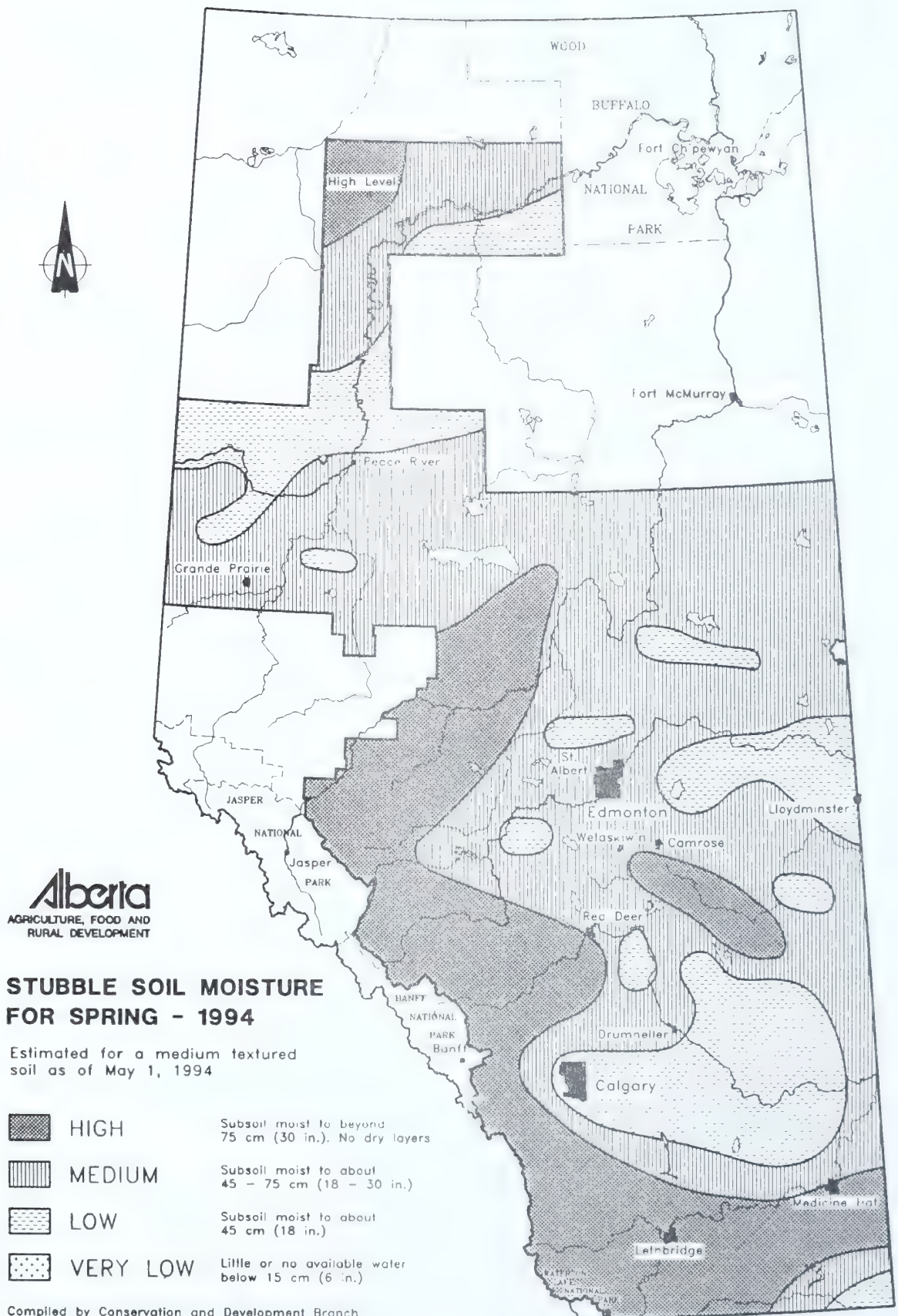
Contact: Allan Howard Joseph Michielsen
381-5861 381-5859

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters



Blood Tribe celebrates first phase of irrigation project

The first of five phases of the Blood Tribe Irrigation Project will be officially unveiled at a grand opening ceremony 250 km south of Calgary on June 9, 1994.

The Blood Tribe Irrigation Project Agreement, made between the tribe, the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta, came into effect on Feb. 24, 1989. In return for providing land for the construction of the St. Mary Reservoir and the Belly-St. Mary Diversion Canal on the Blood Reserve in the early 1950s, the Blood Tribe was allocated sufficient water to irrigate 25,000 acres of land on the reserve. A study done in 1983 confirmed the feasibility of irrigating a large area on the reserve.

The irrigation project began in 1990 and is expected to be completed in 2001. The total cost of the project, over 12 years, is estimated at \$60.5 million. The federal and provincial governments will each contribute \$15.5 million to the project. The Blood Tribe will provide the remaining \$29.5 million. The 25,000 acre project will provide the Blood Tribe with both irrigated land and employment opportunities for its 7,000 members.

When the project is complete it will include over 130 km of water supply pipeline, 36 km of water supply canal, more than 100 farm irrigation systems and a 5,000 acre/foot reservoir.

"The project is a symbol of what can be achieved when the First Nations and both levels of government work together towards a common goal," says Blood Tribe Chief Roy Fox. "We are so proud of this project that we are extending an open invitation to anyone from the general public who wishes to join us for the opening."

Chief Fox, the Blood Band Council, the Blood Tribe Agricultural Project (1991) and all the members of the Blood Tribe are proud to be hosts for the opening. Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Premier Ralph Klein have been invited to attend the ceremonies. Other special guests include representatives from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Industry, Sciences and Technology Canada, Alberta Environmental Protection and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

Contact: Chief Roy Fox C.D. Radke W.R. Chinn
737-3753 427-2145 381-5864

Protection from the sun

Farmers and others who spend large amounts of time exposed to the sun are in a high-risk group when it comes to skin cancer says Alberta Agriculture's protective clothing research associate.

"Farmers often feel they are not at risk of skin cancer because they think they spend more time in a cab than in the sun," says Karen Malyk. "This summer farmers should take a minute to observe the areas of their body not protected from the sun by the clothing they wear. They should also try to keep track of the amount of time they spend in the sun. I bet they'd be surprised."

Statistics indicate 47,000 Canadians will discover they have skin cancer this year. Recent research shows outdoor workers are the highest risk group and more susceptible to the nonmelanoma skin cancers as accumulated exposure to the sun damages the skin enough to cause lesions.

In Alberta in 1990, 3,196 people were diagnosed with nonmelanoma skin cancer. These cancers, also called basal and squamous cell cancers, occur most often on sun exposed areas like the head, neck, arms and legs.

Malignant melanoma is the third and most serious skin cancer. It is also the fastest growing cancer, causing 22 deaths in the province in 1990. It is often caused by periods of extreme sun exposure.

Malyk says that avoiding the sun during peak hours is the best way to minimize the risk. "Unfortunately, that isn't very practical for outdoor workers. A more realistic solution is to wear protective clothing."

She suggests using long-sleeved shirts, long pants, wide-brimmed hats and sunscreen.

"Pay special attention to the back of the neck, the hands and face when considering your clothing," says Malyk. "A wide-brimmed hat will protect the ears, temples, head and face."

A sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 will provide protection from the sun's rays. Sunscreen buyers should watch for the Canadian Dermatology Association approved logo.

More information on sun protection will be available at the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society direct seeding demonstrations. They are being held: May 30 and 31, Donnelly; June 2, Killam; June 7, Fort Saskatchewan; and, June 9, Strathmore.

"People will be able to try on a selection of sun protection hats and get other information at a booth set up at the demonstrations," says Malyk. "Our participation ties in well with Sun Awareness Week, June 6 to 12. Albertans are encouraged to Slip, Slap, Slop – slip on a shirt, slap on a hat, slop on some sunscreen."

Contact: Karen Malyk
427-2412

Yellowheaded Spruce Sawfly

If the needles on your spruce tree start mysteriously disappearing in June, it may be the work of the Yellowheaded Spruce Sawfly says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The damage begins with only parts of the new tender needles being eaten away," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks. "But as the pest grows, so too does its appetite. Eventually, it will eat whole needles and work its way back to old growth."

Other characteristics of an infected tree are shabby appearance and a yellowish brown color. In an excessive attack trees can be stripped of all their needles.

"Sawfly attacks can result in the death of trees," explains Barkley. "Repeated attacks weaken trees, making them more susceptible to other factors like adverse weather conditions."

Seeing this insect before it causes severe damage is part of the problem. When newly hatched, they are caterpillar-like and yellowish green in color and they have a yellow or green head. Mature insects are 2 cm long with either a yellow or red head. The body is green with grey-green stripes running from head to tail and waxy looking. The Yellowheaded Spruce Sawfly is well camouflaged and looks a lot like the needles it eats. Feeding stops in mid-July as the larvae drop to the ground. There they spin a cocoon in the soil where they spend the winter.

"Controlling this insect is quite simple," says Barkley. "Hand picking is one option. Hosing the larva with water is another. Malathion and permethrin are two chemical control options."

"The biggest trick to controlling this insect is seeing them."

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Protective clothing information available

If you have questions about protective clothing, Alberta Agriculture has the information to help you.

A wide array of self-help information is available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. A brochure, a video and a book provide information on protective clothing and other pesticide issues says Karen Malyk, Alberta Agriculture's protective clothing research associate.

The brochure's title asks, "Handling pesticides: Are you protected?" (Homedex 1353-90). It explains how pesticides enter the body, proper protective clothing for working with pesticides, how to take care of protective clothing and equipment, and where to get help in an emergency.

Don't Gamble With Pesticides is a department produced video about protective clothing. The 18-minute video is available for loan from all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

"As well as detailing what to use as protective clothing, the video also discusses handling and washing protective clothing, toxicity, personal hygiene and the effects of pesticides if proper procedures are not followed.

Crop Protection with Chemicals 1994 (the Blue Book) is an annual reference guide on applying pesticides, new chemicals, clothing and equipment, and registration changes. It also provides symptoms of poisoning, poison information telephone numbers and the telephone numbers of manufacturers with emergency lines.

"The Blue Book is used as a general guide for working with pesticides, but it contains a wealth of safety information," says Malyk. "District offices have the Blue Book in stock and it sells for \$10 plus GST."

For more complete information, farmers and members of farm families can take the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program. Since 1992, it has trained thousands of Alberta Farmers about protective clothing and other pesticide safety issues.

Contact: *Karen Malyk*
427-2412

One tough perennial

The peony must be tough – it's often found growing around abandoned farm yards says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"There are hundreds of varieties of peonies available," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "And there's a peony for every landscaping need."

Peonies range in height from 45 to 90 cm and have a 12 to 20 cm diameter flower. The flowers can be single or double and are creamy yellow, white, deep red, rose or pink in color. Many varieties have fragrant flowers.

Besides the common peony, there is the Fernleaf peony which is hardy and well-suited to Alberta. It has finely cut leaves and flowers that are single or double, red or pink.

The peony is a long-living perennial with a deep tap root. As a result soil preparation is important to planting success.

Barkley says that they grow best in deep clay-loam soil, but any good garden soil will work. Work organic material, either peat moss or compost, deeply into the soil. The planting spot should be in full sun, although they will tolerate two or three hours of shade per day. Peonies can't stand competition for water from trees or shrubs.

Plant the peony tuber so there is no more than 5 cm of soil over the eyes. Firm the soil and then water well. Peonies in containers can be planted throughout the season, but dividing established plants is best done in early September. Each root division should have three to five buds for success.

Fertilizing peonies with a garden fertilizer in the spring will make the plants more vigorous. The blossoms become very heavy so

support is a necessity. In the fall, the foliage should be cut to the ground and destroyed. A thorough watering before freeze-up will help ensure winter survival.

"The most common question asked about peonies is – why do they not bloom?" says Barkley. "This can be caused by planting them too deep, poor drainage, shade, competition, late spring frosts or botrytis."

Barkley adds that botrytis causes young stems to die or the buds to turn brown or black. This can be treated with fungicides and cultural controls.

"All in all, the peony is a stunning plant that is a worthwhile addition to a sunny spot in any yard," she says.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Agri-News Briefs

Cowboy poets gather

The 1994 Cowboy Poets Gathering goes on June 17 to 19 in Pincher Creek. Canada's largest gathering of its kind, features pickin', poetry, social events, a church service, dog trials and a rancher rodeo. The gathering is co-hosted by the Alberta Cowboy Poetry Association and the Pincher Creek Ag Society. Last year 4,000 people attended and more are expected this year. Over 80 pickers and poets are already registered, coming from as far away as Texas and Manitoba. For more information on the event, contact Anne Stevick at 627-4733 or Susan Vogelaar at 627-2076.

Canadian Seed Growers' Association annual meeting

The Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CSGA) 90th annual meeting, July 6 and 8 in Regina, will feature a combination of industry speakers, one-on-one discussion opportunities and a comprehensive list of family-orientated social events. For more information, contact the Registration Committee, CSGA Annual Meeting, Attention: Bob Whiting, 2625 Victoria Ave., Regina, Saskatchewan S4T 7T9, phone (306) 569-4454 or fax (306) 569-4897.

Lakeland College organizes summer events

Lakeland College in Vermilion has a number of summer events and clinics planned for June and July. The Vern Sapergia reining clinic will be held in Vermilion on June 10 to 12. For more information or to register, contact Chris Spasoff. The college is also holding a Farm Camp on July 3 to 8. The camp is for children ages 9-12. For more information, contact Christina Arvidsson-Kupchenko. A western riding school goes on July 4 to 8 in Vermilion. For more information, contact Chris Spasoff. Both contacts can be reached at 1-800-661-4127.

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AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

JUL 26 1994

May 30, 1994

Grasshopper forecast

Grasshopper problems this summer are likely to decline in southern regions of the province, but increase in some northern areas says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The decline in the south is the result of well above average rainfall in 1993," says Mike Dolinski, provincial entomologist. "Increased infestations are anticipated in the north because of dry conditions during the 1993 breeding season."

Dolinski notes that the severity of grasshopper infestations in the current year depends on the weather and abundance of grasshoppers the previous summer.

"Grasshoppers tend to do best in areas where moisture is available, but low," explains Dolinski. "Heat in late summer promotes maximum mating and egg-laying. A warm autumn enhances embryonic development. A warm, dry spring and early summer increases survival of hatchlings and the potential for subsequent crop damage."

The 1994 grasshopper forecast for Alberta, a co-operative effort on the part of federal, provincial and municipal agriculture agencies, indicates the wettest July in southern Alberta since 1902, severely restricted the egg-laying by grasshoppers along roads and crops. The forecast also notes that grasshopper populations were high enough in 1993 that infestations would have increased rapidly under drier conditions.

"The cool weather accompanying the rain slowed grasshopper development. Frequent collections in southern Alberta last summer showed the pests matured two to three weeks later than normal, resulting in a much shorter breeding season," says Dolinski. "The breeding population at the end of the season was less abundant and less mature."

In southern Alberta the grasshopper problem has collapsed into some small "hot spots", while some northern areas recorded increases in grasshopper numbers because of better breeding conditions. Some spraying of grazing land and crops is anticipated in northern areas in 1994.

The areas where grasshopper numbers increased in 1993 were: County of Barrhead, No. 11; County of Beaver, No. 9; County of Lac Ste. Anne, No. 28; County of Parkland, No. 31; County of Vermilion River, No. 24; County of Wetaskiwin, No. 10; Municipal District of Bonnyville, No. 87; and, Municipal District of Taber, No. 14. (See Figure 1.)

Areas with moderate to high numbers of grasshoppers in 1993 included: County of Athabasca, No. 12; County of Warner, No. 5; County of Vulcan, No. 2; County of Lac Ste. Anne, No. 28; County of Parkland, No. 31; County of Barrhead, No. 11; Municipal District of Bonnyville, No. 87; Municipal District of Taber, No. 14; and, Special Area of Oyen, No. 3.

Dolinski says that the above mentioned areas are at the greatest risk in 1994. Field margins, fence lines, roadsides and crops grown on stubble must be watched closely when hatching begins this spring.

"Spraying isn't recommended unless the hatch is nearly complete, abundance is greater than 10 grasshoppers per square metre and damage is visible," says Dolinski.

He adds that federal and provincial research programs are developing sustainable methods of grasshopper control using biocontrol agents and reduced use of chemical insecticides.

Contact: Mike Dolinski
427-7098

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Alberta
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RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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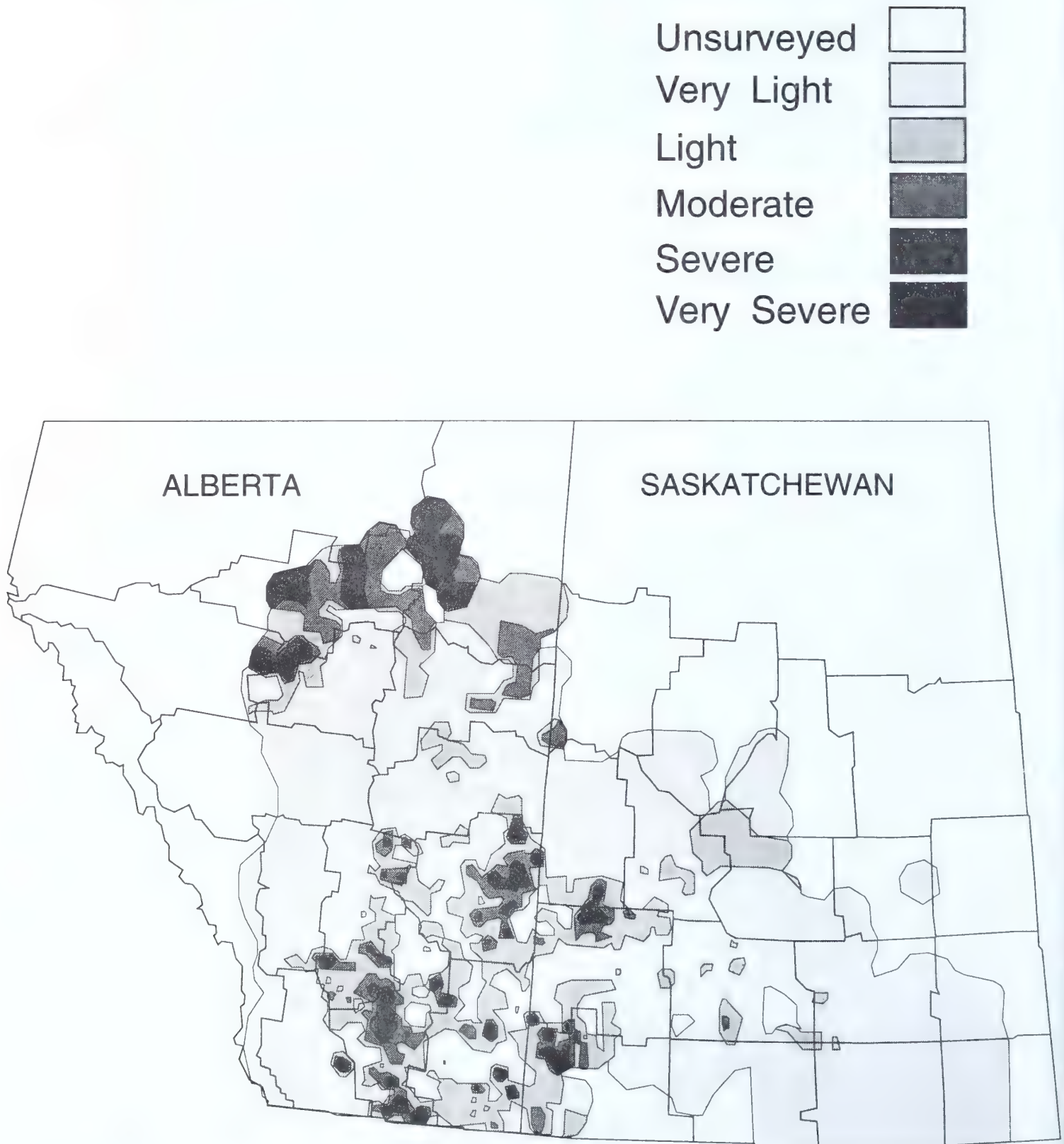


Figure 1. Density of grasshoppers on the prairies from the 1993 survey. These categories correspond approximately to very light (0-4), light (4-8), moderate (8-12), severe (12-24) and very severe (>24) risk of crop damage.

Paszkowski calls for Hall of Fame nominations

Walter Paszkowski, minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, is inviting the province's agriculture community to submit nominations for the Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame.

"The Hall of Fame awards honor the most outstanding members of our industry, past and present," he says. "The awards also acknowledge the essential role played in the lives of all Albertans by agriculture and the members of our agriculture community.

"Each Hall of Fame member shares a dedication, endurance and willingness to adapt and innovate that has made each of them leaders at home and in the international marketplace," adds Paszkowski.

Nominations for the 1995 Agriculture Hall of Fame must be received by August 2. Forms are available through Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development district offices or by writing to: Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame, Communications Division, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6.

Induction into the Hall of Fame is a distinction awarded to people – from producers to processors of primary agricultural products – who have played major roles in advancing agriculture in the province. Any Albertan who has made an outstanding contribution to agriculture at the local, provincial, national or international level is eligible for admission.

Hall of Fame inductees for 1995 will be honored at a ceremony next March. The banquet and awards presentation traditionally coincides with the beginning of Agriculture Week in the province. Inductees are featured in a province-wide campaign highlighting the awareness week.

The Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame is located on the main floor of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development headquarters, the J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000 - 113 Street in Edmonton.

Contact: *Bard Haddrell* 427-2127 *Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus* 427-2137

Researchers receive funding

More than \$1 million has been awarded to Alberta researchers in the agriculture and food sectors through the Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (CAESA) Agreement.

The resulting research will help to minimize the impact of food production on the environment through conservation of natural resources.

The governments of Canada and Alberta are sharing equally the cost of the CAESA Agreement, with the federal government participating through the Green Plan Sustainable Agriculture Initiative. The two governments will provide more than \$40 million over five years, ending March 31, 1997. A total of \$4.7 million has been targeted for research to address the priority areas of CAESA.

The research program is made up of three components: a soil conservation chair at the University of Alberta, sustainable cropping studies and proposal based applied research projects.

Applied research proposals submitted for the second year of funding (April 1994 to March 1995) were reviewed in December 1993 by the broad-based, producer, industry and government technical review committee.

Of the 66 proposals submitted, 10 renewals and 12 new proposals were supported for funding for a total of \$1,079,089 in 1994-95. Twenty of the supported proposals addressed one or more of CAESA's main priority areas: soil conservation (10 projects); water quality and quantity (six projects); pollution control and waste management (three projects); and, wildlife habitat (one project). Two projects dealt with alternative pest control.

The supported proposals are all multi-year projects and as a result it is anticipated that there will not be a call for new proposals for 1995-96.

Final reports from eight, one-year projects that were funded in 1993-94 will be released later in 1994.

For a list of the research projects that received funding or for more information on the CAESA Agreement, contact Dr. Barry Olsen, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Centre, Box 3000, Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4B1 or phone (403) 327-4591, Ext. 359.

Contact: *Dr. Barry Olsen*
327-4591 Ext. 359

Horn fly survey reveals information

A 1993 horn fly survey conducted in northeast Alberta shows the importance of fly control says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The survey shows that 56 per cent of the cattle in the survey region – approximately 266,000 head – were not treated for horn flies," says Ali Khan, a livestock pest control specialist. "Research literature suggests that the economic losses from horn flies can range from \$5 to \$18 per head. At \$5 per head the loss to cattle producers in the region would be \$1.33 million."

Information for the survey was gathered in the Provost, Wainwright, Lloydminster, Vermilion, Bonnyville, St. Paul, Lac La Biche, Smoky Lake, Lamont, Two Hills, Vegreville and Ryley areas.

After studying the data, a set of recommendations was put forward by the survey team.

Producers should tag cattle as close to the beginning of fly season as possible as tagging earlier is both a waste of time and product. The effective killing period of pyrethroid impregnated tags is 60 days, with most of the insecticide being released in the first 30 days.

Tagging should be done to the recommended rate for maximum fly control and the tags should be on animals that carry the highest number of flies – cows, not calves.

All tags should be removed at the end of each season as flies exposed to sublethal doses of insecticide may develop resistance.

Alternate each year between synthetic pyrethroid tags and another class of insecticide, such as organophosphate tags.

The use of self-treatment stations (oilers, dust bags, back rubbers, etc.) will provide the most economical and continuous treatment of horn flies.

Horn flies are a major cattle pest found in most cattle producing countries. They have the general appearance of house flies, but are only half the size and are more slender. Horn flies are almost exclusively pests of cattle, but will also feed on horses, sheep, goats and wildlife. The flies congregate, resting head downwards on the back and shoulders of their host.

Horn flies feed by piercing the hide and sucking blood. Adults feed from 10 to 38 times per day, causing intense irritation and stress to the host. As many as 1,000 flies can be found on a single cow and 2,000 to 10,000 can be found on a bull.

Producer concern over fly control, its effectiveness and cost, sparked the survey. Producers who are treating for horn flies are estimated to be spending \$2 to \$4 per head.

"Some producers are concerned that insecticide impregnated ear tags may not prove effective in the future with an increasing number of fly population showing resistance to pyrethroids," says Khan "This resistance is developed after years of successive use,"

The 1993 survey began in May and ran until September. A total of 2,693 animals were analyzed. Over 30 herds of treated cattle were compared to the same number of untreated herds. Each of the study herds contained no less than 20 mature cows. Treated and control herds were a minimum of two miles apart.

Fly counts were conducted each month. Fly numbers ranged from none to very low in May. The numbers increased through June and July and peaked in late July and August. Cold, wet weather during the count week in September resulted in a dramatic drop-off in total numbers.

"We found that in most untreated herds horn fly numbers are three times higher than in treated herds," said Khan. "Another key finding is that in general animals are treated too early in the fly season, resulting in the reduced efficacy on the ear tags."

Contact: Ali Khan
427-5083

Rural Albertans are calling before they dig

Rural Albertans are playing it safe by calling before they dig says Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager.

"Well done rural Alberta," says Solomon Kyeremanteng. "You're calling Alberta 1st Call before you dig and run into problems."

Alberta 1st Call is a non-profit organization of cities, towns, villages, counties, natural gas co-ops, water users' co-ops and pipelines, natural gas, electrical, telephone and cable television companies who want all Albertans to "Call Before You Dig."

The 237-member group has a toll free 800 telephone number and a free cellular number. By calling 1-800-242-3447 or cellular Star 3447, the public can have underground lines and hazards identified before digging begins.

"To the end of April, calls originating from rural Alberta are up 18 per cent over the same period last year," notes Kyeremanteng. "That means the Alberta 1st Call word is getting out there."

There are countless miles of buried cables, lines and pipelines throughout Alberta. Many are just below the surface, with more being added each year.

"We must all work together to avoid disruptions to essential services or catastrophes," says Kyeremanteng. "Imagine cutting off thousands of telephones by simply slicing through a one-inch diameter fibre optic cable."

Call Alberta 1st Call whenever you plan to dig or disturb the ground for manure pits, sewage lagoons, soil or gravel testing, moisture probing, post pounding, drainage ditching, land levelling, tree removal or planting and subsoil aeration. Call at least two days in advance of beginning your project. Remember, landowners are responsible for damaged cable or pipe.

More Alberta 1st Call information is available at Alberta Agriculture district offices, PFRA regional offices, regional planning commission offices, UFA stores and rural gas co-op offices.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

Absorption rates make protective clothing critical

Pesticides enter the body when splashed in the eyes, inhaled or swallowed, but absorption through the skin is still the most common type of exposure for farmers says Alberta Agriculture's protective clothing research associate.

"Different parts of the body have different absorption rates and that's why there are specific clothing recommendations about the type of protective clothing you should wear when you handle farm chemicals," said Karen Malyk. "The proper protective clothing will greatly reduce the amount of exposure, and additional layers of clothing is one technique to prevent absorption."

The greatest risk of exposure occurs when handling, mixing or loading undiluted products.

The hands are easily the most exposed part of the body. Unlined nitrile or neoprene gloves are recommended for both the pesticide user and whoever handles pesticide-soiled clothing. Gloves should fit properly so the wearer can make fine adjustments, like those on a sprayer nozzle.

"Protecting your hands really reduces your body's total exposure, but you also need to take care of other vulnerable areas that have high absorption rates," notes Malyk.

These include the scalp, forehead, ear canal and genitals.

The genital area has an absorption rate that is almost 12 times higher than the forearm. The ear canal rate is more than five times higher and the scalp and forehead absorption rates are about four times greater than the forearm.

"This means protecting your head is very important," adds Malyk. "A hard hat is recommended and the hat band should be plastic. Foam sweat bands and cloth liners should be removed as they absorb pesticides and continue to contaminate the head each time the hat is used."

Malyk suggests using ear plugs and disposable coveralls with a hood. She also recommends an impermeable apron when handling, pouring or mixing concentrated pesticides. These are all example of extra layers of protection.

She also emphasizes the importance of reading the product label. "It not only gives you information on the product itself, but it also has guidelines for the proper protective clothing to wear," says Malyk.

Protective clothing and equipment should be thoroughly washed after every use.

For more information on absorption rates, protective clothing or the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Karen Malyk
427-2412

Clean-up after pesticide use is also important

What you wear when handling and applying pesticides is important to how well you are protected, but there's another part to the safety equation says Alberta Agriculture's protective clothing research associate.

"Washing yourself, your protective clothing and your equipment is equally important," says Karen Malyk.

"Your skin can absorb chemicals from inadequately cleaned clothing and equipment, so the washing routine demands special care," she says.

She recommends taking off protective clothing and equipment outdoors, making sure to remove pesticide granules from cuffs and pockets.

Recent Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program survey results show 48 per cent of those surveyed did not enter their home while wearing contaminated clothing.

"More education is needed to change the habits of the other 52 per cent," notes Malyk.

Nitrile or Neoprene gloves should be used to handle soiled clothing. Discard any garment saturated with a chemical

concentrate. For temporary storage before washing, use a plastic bag. To discard any disposable clothing, place in a plastic bag and take to an approved landfill site.

"Even if you're spraying every day for a week, wash your protective clothing daily. That includes protective equipment. This prevents a build-up of pesticide residues and minimizes exposure risk. It's also easier to remove residues if the clothing is washed immediately," adds Malyk.

About 85 per cent of farmers who took the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program in 1993 changed their clothing immediately or at the end of the day.

Protective clothing should be washed separately from regular laundry. Pre-treat with a stain remover or use a pre-rinse/soak cycle on the washing machine. Use the hot water setting, full water level and a normal cycle plus an extra heavy duty detergent as recommended for heavily soiled clothing. Repeat the wash. When finished, run the empty washer through a full cycle with hot water and detergent.

Line drying is also recommended. This prevents contamination of the dryer. This practice is also becoming more common.

Equipment such as hard hats, rubber boots, respirators and goggles should be washed daily with hot soapy water and rinsed. Wash both the inside and outside of gloves. Check for small holes, cracks and discoloration. Replace with a new pair if there are any of these signs of degradation.

Personal hygiene is also critical adds Malyk. "You should shower and shampoo your hair after you use pesticides. Washing your hands is also very important. Don't eat, drink, smoke or go to the bathroom unless you've first washed your hands thoroughly."

For more information on protective clothing, laundering pesticide soiled clothing or the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Program, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Karen Malyk
427-2412

Agri-News Briefs

"Croportunities II" proceedings available

To meet the increasing demand for information on specialty crop production the University of Saskatchewan hosted the "Croportunities II" conference on July 27 and 28, 1993.

Thirty-four guest speakers discussed producing and marketing specialty crops. A 200-page conference proceedings contains their viewpoints and other conference information. Copies of the proceedings are available for sale (\$21.40 includes GST, shipping and handling) from: U-Learn Centre, Extension Division - Kirk Hall, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0W0 or phone (306) 966-5565.

Saskatoon harvesters available

To help promote the Saskatoon industry, the Fruit Growers Society of Alberta is making two recently modified Saskatoon harvesters available to producers. These machines are capable of harvesting one acre of mature orchard in one hour. The society is now arranging a harvesting schedule. The early registration deadline for the schedule is June 10. For more information or to register, contact Shirley Alton at 998-2782, Lawrence Wilson at 488-9052 or Frank Klassen at 961-2171

Farmers' Day

Farmers' Day is celebrated annually in communities throughout Alberta to raise awareness of agriculture's contribution to the economy and to draw attention to the thousands of men and women who earn their living from the land. Farmers' Day is June 10th. Watch for special events in your community.

20th anniversary of Alberta Pork Congress

The Alberta Pork Congress celebrates its 20th year on June 14 to 16 at the Westerner Park in Red Deer. The congress will feature consumer and social events, educational seminars, awards presentations, a video auction and a swine show and sale. The swine show and sale will both be held at the Stockmen's Pavilion. The show goes at 1 p.m. on June 14 and the sale is at 1 p.m. on June 16. For more information, contact Albert Eringfeld in Leduc at 986-5179 or the Alberta Pork Congress - Red Deer office at 340-5307.

Fresh cut and dried flowers workshop planned

The Alberta Market Gardeners Association is holding a Post Harvest Treatment of Fresh Cut and Dried Flowers workshop at the Land Sciences Building at Olds College on June 18. The workshop will be conducted by Mark Koch of Robert Koch Industries Inc., Bennet, Colorado. A full day of activities is planned as registration goes at 8:00 a.m. and the workshop runs from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will be demonstrations, discussions and illustrations of dying and preserving flowers and foliage with glycol and dyes. Space is limited to the first 65 paid registrants. For more information on the workshop, contact Debbie Everts at 627-4589 or Lloyd Hausher at 362-3391.

AGRI-NEWS

June 6, 1994

CANADIANA

JUL 26 1994

Alberta's farmers to be heard

When federal and provincial agriculture ministers meet in Winnipeg this July, the views of Alberta farmers will be strongly represented. Those views will be developed in a series of public consultations to be held throughout the province in June.

"Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development is calling on the province's farmers to provide input on important policy proposals that I will present at the upcoming Ministers' meeting," said Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Walter Paszkowski. "These consultations will gauge producers' reactions to the proposed strategies on the best ways to increase opportunities for farmers to earn income from the marketplace. We also want to determine farmers' opinions on the best ways to offset farm income losses."

Consultation participants will discuss farm safety net programs and other topics such as Canadian grain transportation and marketing systems, trade barriers, market opportunities, value-added processing, inputs and management knowledge skills.

"We want to deal with these topics on a comprehensive basis," said Paszkowski. "These consultations will be crucial to ensuring that Alberta farmers' positions on these topics will be represented."

Earlier this year, the Government of Alberta began setting new directions for farm income support policy in response to farmers' reactions to safety net discussions at the federal level. First, a number of meetings across Alberta were held with farmers, who were consulted on the future structure of farm income support. Second, the Province assessed the farmers' responses and subsequently mapped out proposed strategies to meet farmers' objectives. The upcoming round of consultations will represent the third step in the process; farmers being asked for their reactions to these strategies.

The consultations will be open to all members of the general farming community. Members of the Standing Policy Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development will attend the consultations to hear producers' views on the topics to be discussed.

Consultations will be held in the following communities:

Vermilion - Elks hall - 5019-49th Ave. - June 9

Olds - Olds College - Alumni Centre - June 13

Taber - Legion Hall - 5205-48th Ave. - June 14

Hanna - Hanna and District Community Centre - 503-5th Ave.

West - June 15

Westlock - Westlock and District Community Hall - 10711-104th Ave. - June 20

Fairview - Legion - 110 St. - June 22

All of the consultations will run between 11:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Lunch will be available at all locations at a cost of \$5 per person.

More consultation information is available from the Policy Secretariat of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development at (403) 427-2417.

Participants are asked to pre-register at least two working days before each meeting by calling the Policy Secretariat.

Contact: C.D. Radke
427-2145

Joe Rosario
427-2637

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Engineering committee looks at standards

Standardizing the containers and transfer systems used for packaging chemicals is currently an issue facing both farmers and the industry, says Alberta Agriculture Engineering Advisory Committee (AAEAC) chairman Russ Nelson.

With the explosion of different containers and transfer systems offered by chemical companies, the industry is trying to standardize chemical packaging says Nelson.

"There seems to be more different product containers out now than there were previously," says Nelson. "It's getting discouraging for farmers when it comes time to handling the chemical."

The packaging issue was raised by Frank Vas at the AAEAC bi-annual spring meeting. Vas, who is an AAEAC member, also farms at Wretham.

"Every company has different ways of presenting their products, from reusable mini-bulk systems and disposable containers to soluble containers. None of the transfer systems used for mini-bulk systems are the same," says Vas. "The result is the farmer has to adapt to every type and manufacturer of chemical. This becomes very frustrating, time consuming and can be a safety hazard."

Although the Crop Protection Institute of Canada (CPIC) has established a subcommittee to assist in developing standards for the industry, Nelson says most companies see packaging as a way to market their product in a different manner from that of their competition.

Similar efforts are underway by the American Society of Agriculture Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Agricultural Chemical Association and various agencies in Europe.

AAEAC's purpose is to identify research needs, concerns and future issues that will impact the industry. For more information on the Alberta Agriculture Engineering Advisory Committee, contact Nelson at Olds College, Trades and Technology Department at 556-8296.

Contact: Russ Nelson
556-8296

Slaughter cattle market slides

Fed cattle markets have experienced nothing but negative news in recent weeks says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"What began in April as a minor seasonal price adjustment, turned into a market crash of major proportions in May," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch. "The negative fundamentals driving the price collapse are U.S. beef production and feedlot inventories that are well above levels of a year ago, and mediocre beef demand."

"As with any major market move, emotions have overtaken fundamentals as the influence driving the market," adds Gietz.

U.S. prices for feedlot cattle have dropped from \$77 per hundred weight (cwt) in early April to below \$65 cwt in late May.

Gietz notes that as the price slide gathered momentum, packers relied on a just-in-time purchasing strategy as delaying purchases almost always resulted in lower purchase prices.

"U.S. feedlots, facing huge losses, attempted to fight the market, resulting in cattle being carried over from week to week. This worsened the downward trend," says Gietz.

Wholesale beef prices followed the declines in the cash cattle markets and live cattle futures contracts declined by a similar amount to cash, with the largest drop in June and August contracts. Several times futures markets rallied early in the week, only to be driven sharply lower by the end of the week.

In Alberta, fed cattle prices declined from a Canfax average steer price of \$97.07 cwt in the first week of April to sales below \$80 cwt in late May.

"A stable to stronger Canadian dollar and seasonally weaker basis levels also contributed to lower Canadian fed cattle prices," says Gietz.

Slaughter cow and bull markets fared much better than the fed cattle markets, experiencing only slight declines on tight supplies and seasonally strong demand for manufactured beef.

"The cattle market has made a major downwards move, requiring a complete revision of all forecasts," notes Gietz. "The futures charts are particularly relevant as lows from 1991 were taken out this May. The market in the first quarter of 1993 is now clearly exposed as a fluke of nature, and the downward trend which began in 1991 is still underway."

On a more positive note, Gietz notes that at some point the market can be expected to rebound. He says that emotion played a large part in the recent crash and emotion tends to swing both ways. Another factor that points toward a rebound is that the seven major cattle feeding states have for seven months in a row experienced feedlot placements below the five-year average.

"Perhaps as early as this summer, lower placements will show up in the form of reduced beef supply," says Gietz. "But even with a significant rebound, prices have definitely moved to a new, lower level."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Purple Loosestrife is a threat in Alberta

With the gardening season upon us, it is time for homeowners to be on the look-out for Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) says Alberta Agriculture's supervisor of preventative and regulatory services.

"Purple Loosestrife is a noxious weed that aggressively invades wetlands and chokes out native vegetation," says Shafteek Ali. "It also reduces the availability of food and shelter for wildlife."

Purple Loosestrife is perennial and can produce 2.5 million seeds per year. The seeds are easily spread through stream, rivers and lakes, causing infestation that is difficult to control. The plant grows to a height of one to three metres. Its leaves are tongue shaped with smooth edges, attached directly to a four-sided stem.

"It can be identified by its bright pink/purple flowers – each with five or six petals – growing on vertical spikes," notes Ali. "It blooms from mid-July through September."

Purple Loosestrife is similar to ornamental *Lythrum* and the two are often confused for one another. Gardens containing *Lythrum* also pose a threat as it can cross with Purple Loosestrife to produce viable seeds.

Ali notes that the nursery trade has voluntarily discontinued the sale of *Lythrum* and gardeners are not only being encouraged not to grow the plant, but also to remove it from their gardens.

"Your local nursery or garden centre can suggest safe alternatives to *Lythrum*," adds Ali.

When removing garden plantings of *Lythrum*, dig and burn, fire restrictions permitting. If the plant material can't be burned, it should be sealed in a plastic bag for normal garbage disposal at a landfill site. Do not compost *Lythrum* as it can regenerate from cut shoots and roots.

For more information on Purple Loosestrife or to report an infestation, contact your local municipal weed inspector.

Contact: Shafteek Ali
427-7098

Leave it running – leave them alone

Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program has teamed up with the North American Farm Safety and Environmental Centre in Raymond and CFCN Television in Lethbridge to produce a new safety commercial.

"The 30-second commercial emphasizes shutting off machinery before you leave it or try to work on it," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, farm safety program manager. "If you leave it running – you could be injured or even killed, leaving your family members alone."

The commercial features a farm woman, along with her son and daughter. The three family members are shown trying to cope with the loss of a husband and father.

"It's a hard-hitting, emotional message that is meant to drive home the importance of safety around farm machinery," says Kyeremanteng. "We made the commercial because the majority of farm accidents involve farmers who leave equipment running while they attempt repairs or service."

He added that many CFCN, channel 5 viewers will already have seen the commercial as it ran approximately 25 times in May.

"For those Lethbridge area viewers who didn't see it in May, it will be running again during the month of July," notes Kyeremanteng. "I guarantee that if you see it, you'll remember it. And, remembering the message to shut off machinery is what we're counting on."

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

Rural Albertans can "Tune In" to hazardous sounds

Farms are often seen as quiet, serene places to live and work. But tractors, pig barns and various other types of equipment found on the farm may cause permanent hearing loss if your ears are left unprotected from hazardous sound levels.

Alberta farm families will soon be able to pin point those areas on the farm that may cause potential hearing loss with help from a new self-instructional kit that currently is in prototype form.

The "Tune In to Sound Induced Hearing Loss" kit was announced on May 25, 1994 at the joint conference of Women of Uniform and the Alberta Women's Institutes in Olds. The kit is a partnership project between Women of Uniform, the Alberta Women's Institutes, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology at the University of Alberta. The purpose of the partnership is to raise rural Albertans' awareness of sound induced hearing loss and its prevention through farm safety programs.

"Together we hope to show rural Albertans that any sound, even in a home environment, can be loud enough to damage hearing," says Project Co-ordinator Florence Trautman.

A sound is potentially hazardous if it exceeds Occupational Health and Safety noise regulation levels, causes ringing in your ears or gives you a temporary hearing loss, says Dr. Susan Haske, "Tune In" project contact at the University of Alberta.

"To test for a temporary sound induced hearing loss, before and after using a piece of equipment, try quickly rubbing your thumb and forefinger together six inches away from your ear to see if you can hear the sound your fingers make," says Haske. "If you can hear the sound before, but can't hear it after, you should have been wearing suitable hearing protection."

In order to reduce the risk of hearing loss, Haske recommends wearing ear protection, reducing the exposure time to the sound, or turning the sound volume down.

Haske says it's important to know that sound hazard depends on both the intensity of the sound and the amount of exposure. For example, during her research Haske conducted meter readings in one pig barn where the decibel (dB) level was 101. According to Alberta noise regulations, you should only be exposed to that level of noise for less than one hour per day without ear protection.

"That is only one example of an animal barn. A lot depends on the size of the barn and the number of animals in it," she says. "If you were to spend more than one hour everyday in an environment of 101 dB, wearing some form of hearing protection is recommended."

Five prototype kits are available on loan from the Women of Unifarm office in Edmonton – contact Shirley Dyck at 451-5912. The kits include a sound level meter, sound exposure guidelines, an information booklet, an audio demonstration tape and disposable ear plugs.

Contact: Florence Trautman
963-6870

Shirley Dyck
451-5912

Agri-News Briefs

Plowing match tradition continues

The 24th Annual Alberta Provincial Plowing Match is being held in Wanham, Alberta on June 24, 25 and 26. The three-day event celebrates Alberta's rich heritage and proud tradition of farming. Many events are planned in addition to the actual plowing competitions. These include: an antique machinery display, a gymkhana, sheepdog trials, tractor pulling, horseshoe pitching, children's programs, displays and demonstrations, a wide variety of entertainment and many social events. For more information, contact Shirley Wells at 694-3915.

Rose tour planned

The University of Alberta Devonian Botanic Gardens at Devon, Alberta is holding a rose tour on July 17. The tour will visit the Botanic Gardens' collection, as well as two private collections in Edmonton. The tour runs from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The fee for the tour is \$29 per person. It includes transportation to the various collections. Two pick-up points have been designated. Participants can join the tour at the University of Alberta at 9:30 a.m. or at the Botanic Gardens at 10 a.m. Persons planning to attend are asked to pre-register. For more information, contact Gordon Nielson at 987-2064.

Calgary hosts potato meeting

The 78th annual meeting of the Potato Association of America is being held in Calgary on July 24 to 28. Scientific presentations will be the focus of the meeting that is being hosted by the Potato Growers of Alberta, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. In addition to attending the symposium portion of the meeting, participants will also have the opportunity to tour the City of Calgary, the Rocky Mountains, the "Badlands" of Alberta, the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. Several social events are also planned. For more information on the meeting, contact Isabel McPherson at 541-0911.

Coming agricultural events

Genetics Society of Canada annual meeting

University of Alberta
Edmonton June 8-11
John Bell/David Nash - 492-3290 - Edmonton

National Farm & Ranch Business Management Education Association annual conference

Lethbridge Community College
Lethbridge June 12-16
John B. Whitehead - 320-3313 - Lethbridge;
John G. Calpas - 320-3311 - Lethbridge

4th Stockmen's Range Management course

Cypress Hills June 13-15
Barry Adams - 381-5486 - Lethbridge

20th Annual Alberta Pork Congress purebred swine show and sale

Westerner Exhibition
Red Deer June 14 (show) June 16 (sale)
Albert Eringfeld - 986-5179 - Leduc

1994 Cowboy Poets gathering

Pincher Creek June 17-19
Anne Stevick - 627-4733 - Pincher Creek

Post harvest treatment of fresh cut and dried flowers

Olds College
Olds June 18
Lloyd Hausher - 362-3391 - Brooks

Cattlemens' Futurity '94

Red Deer June 21-23
Lorne Erickson - 748-3138 - Bentley

Alberta Forage Council general meeting

Westerner Exposition
Red Deer June 22
Laurel Aitken - 929-2019 - Beaumont

13th Trifolium conference

Charlottetown, P.E.I. June 22-24
B.R. Christie - (902)566-6878 - P.E.I.

Wanham plowing matches

Wanham June 24-26
Shirley Wells - 694-3763/694-3915 - Wanham

Breton plots field day

Breton (near) June 30
Jim Robertson - U of A Department of Soil Science - 492-0191

Formulations Forum 94: Agrichemical formulations for the 90s and beyond

Washington Hilton Hotel
Washington, D.C. June 30-July 1
(212)244-5225 ext. 94

Women in Agriculture International Conference

Victoria, Australia July 1-3
Department of Agriculture - (951)47-1533

East Lacombe 4-H Beef Club's 75th reunion

Lacombe July 2
H. Solick - 885-4348; J. Baines - 747-2339

Farm Camp (ages 9-12)

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 3-8
Christina Arvidsson - Kupchenko - 1-800-661-4127

CEF Western Rider School (level I-IV)

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 4-8
Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Canadian Seed Growers' Association 90th annual meeting

Regina, Sask. July 6-8
Bob Whiting - (306)569-4454

The North American Tournament (Queen Elizabeth II Cup)

Spruce Meadows
Calgary July 6-10
Spruce Meadows - 974-4200 - Calgary

Calgary Exhibition & Stampede

Stampede Grounds
Calgary July 8-17
261-0162 - Calgary

74th Annual Conference, Agricultural Institute of Canada

Regina, Sask. July 10-14
Bill Harron-(306)780-5071-Regina;
Brenda Machin - (306)566-1664 - Regina

Summer Agricultural Education Institute

Fairview College
Fairview July 10-17
Betty Gabert - 427-2171 - Edmonton

1994 provincial ASB tour

County of Parkland No. 31
Stony Plain July 11-14
Mark Cardinal - 963-8467 - Stony Plain

June 6, 1994

Beginner riding school

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 11-15
Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Specialty conference on swine housing

Delta Regina Hotel
Regina, Sask July 14
Yves Choiniere - (613)679-2218;
Dr. Phillip Thacker - (306)966-4159

Charolais world technical conference

Calgary July 15-24
Ken Aylesworth - 250-9242 - Calgary

"I Wanna be a Cowboy" (cattle events school)

Lakeland College
Vermilion July 18-22
Chris Spasoff - 1-800-661-4127

Westerner Days

Westerner Park
Red Deer July 19-24
Noreen Stuart - 343-7800 - Red Deer

CARA/Ag Service Board Summer Tour

Hanna July 20
Dianne Westerlund - 664-3777 - Oyen

Edmonton Klondike Days

Edmonton Klondike Days Association
Edmonton July 21-30
Northlands - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Outstanding Young Farmers, Alberta Region

Red Deer July 22-24
Noreen Stuart - 343-7800 - Red Deer;
Norman Storch - 854-2593 - Hanna

Leduc West Antique Society Show

Leduc July 23-24
Ron Morris - 955-2562 - Edmonton

Grasslands sheep exhibition

Assiniboia, Sask. July 22-24
Garry Noble - (306)642-7227 - Assiniboia

Potato Association of America 78th Annual Meeting

Calgary Convention Centre
Calgary July 24-28
Isabel McPherson - 541-0911 - Calgary;
Dr. Dermot Lynch - 327-4561 - Lethbridge

National Farm Safety Week

July 25-31
Solomon Kyeremanteng - 427-2186 - Edmonton

Indian Head zero tillage field day

Indian Head Experimental Farm
Indian Head, Sask. July 26-27
Ed Tanner - (306)695-2263

Wild Rose Quarter Horse show

Westerner Park
Red Deer July 26-31
Jackie Harke - 727-2131 - Evansburg

29th International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR)

Ottawa, Ontario August 1-5
Pierre Doyle - (819)994-0246

Fifth world congress on genetics applied to livestock production

University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario August 7-12
Dr. C. Smith, Department of Animal and Poultry Science,
University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1

1994 Whoop-up days

Lethbridge Exhibition Grounds
Lethbridge August 9-14
Twyla Gurr - 328-4491 - Lethbridge

Winfield Ugetuk Day Fair & Rodeo

Winfield Recreation Centre
Winfield August 13
Shirley Cripps - 682-3758 - Winfield; Charlotte Boyd - 682-2464 -
Winfield; Denise Bukkems - 682-3936 - Winfield

Alberta Hunter Horse Show

Westerner Park
Red Deer September 3-5
Sue Cook - 242-7487 - Calgary

The Masters and Equi-Fair

Spruce Meadows
Calgary September 7-11
Spruce Meadows - 974-4200 - Calgary

Outdoor Farm Show'94

Burford, Ontario September 13-15
Ginty Jocius - (519)822-2890 - Guelph

Farmfair '94

AgriCom and Sportex
Edmonton November 4-12
Northlands - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Canadian Wagyu Association annual general meeting

Crossroads Hotel
Calgary November 10
Marcel Morin, 4620 Brockington Rd. N.W., Calgary, AB T2L 1R6

1994 Peace Region Farm Women's Conference

Peace River November 17-18
Linda Hawk Sellin - 835-2291 - Fairview

Alberta Irrigation Projects Association Annual Conference

Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge November 20-22
Stan Klassen/Verna Whitney - 328-3063 - Lethbridge

Canadian Western Agribition

Regina, Sask. November 26-December 2

Vanessa Headford - (306)565-0565 - Regina

Canadian Dexter Cattle Association Annual Conference and General Meeting

Regina, Sask. November 25-27

Donna Hutchinson - Box 29, Louisa, Alberta, T0M 1K0

Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) Western Regional Conference

Calgary January 27

Monika Simon - (514)982-0267

1995 Conservation Workshop Acts 17th annual meeting and farm progress trade show

Westerner Exposition

Red Deer February 23-25

Peter Gamache - 422-4385 - Edmonton;

Russ Evans - 936-5306 - Calgary

June 6, 1994



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Coming agricultural events notice form

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in 1994? Are there any events omitted in the attached list?

1. Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by August 25, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Publishing Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News.
The next edition will be printed September 5, 1994)

AGRI-NEWS

June 13, 1994

CANADIANA

Irrigation infrastructure public meetings scheduled

Public meetings discussing the provincial government's role in funding the rehabilitation of the irrigation infrastructure are scheduled for mid-June, says Barry McFarland.

A sub-committee of the Standing Policy Committee is holding these meetings to gather public input on how a new partnership can be created with irrigation districts and their water users to sustain the irrigation infrastructure of southern Alberta, says McFarland, MLA for Little Bow and the Chairman of the Standing Policy Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development.

"I hope that irrigation districts and their water users will take advantage of this opportunity to provide input to the development of a new way of doing business," says McFarland. "With the need to balance the provincial budget, we need to find new ways to fund the rehabilitation of the irrigation infrastructure. We realize Alberta's irrigation infrastructure creates important opportunities for agricultural diversification, value-added processing and rural development."

In the business plans released last February by Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Environmental Protection, significant changes were proposed in how the province will provide funding. The most significant of these changes is that no funding will be available from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund after the 1995-96 fiscal year.

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's business plan outlines the ministry's intent to continue to provide grants to the irrigation districts on a 75:25 cost sharing basis. This commitment of ongoing funding to the irrigation districts is why the \$16.6 million Irrigation District Rehabilitation Endowment Fund will be disbursed.

Alberta Environmental Protection's business plan contemplates using the newly created Environmental Protection and Enhancement Fund to support the rehabilitation of provincially owned irrigation infrastructure. A 40 cent per acre per foot water user fee is proposed to be one of the user fees collected to finance this new Fund.

The meetings are scheduled to be held in six locations in southern Alberta beginning June 21. All meetings are scheduled to begin at 1:30 pm.

- Tuesday, June 21 – Brooks, Heritage Inn
– Taber, Heritage Inn
- Wednesday, June 22 – Strathmore, Wheatland County Inn
– Bow Island, Legion Hall
- Thursday, June 23 – Cardston, Carriage House Theater
– Lethbridge, El Rancho, Fancy Dan's room

The standing Policy Subcommittee will also be holding private meetings with the 13 irrigation districts to receive their input.

Background information on provincial irrigation infrastructure funding is available from the irrigation branch in Lethbridge by

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This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

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calling 381-5140. Those wishing to make a presentation to the subcommittee are also asked to call this number.

Contact: Brian Colgan Jake Thiessen
422-4596 427-6252

The members of the Irrigation subcommittee are:

Barry McFarland, Chairman, MLA, Little Bow Constituency
Hon. Jack Ady, MLA, Cardston-Chief Mountain Constituency
Glen Clegg, MLA, Dunvegan Constituency
David Coutts, MLA, Pincher Creek-Macleod Constituency
Clint Dunford, MLA, Lethbridge West Constituency
Robert Fischer, MLA Wainwright Constituency
Ron Hierath, MLA, Taber-Warner Constituency
Lyle Oberg, MLA, Bow Valley Constituency
Rob Renner, MLA, Medicine Hat Constituency

University of Alberta holds Breton Plots field day

The Department of Soil Science at the University of Alberta is celebrating 65 years of experimental work at its Breton Plots with a field day on June 30, 1994.

"The Breton Plots are some of the oldest research plots in the world," says Jim Robertson, professor and chair of the Department of Soil Science. "I like to think of them as a library of information that can tell us what happens to soils after 65 years of cropping and treatment techniques."

The Breton Plots are situated on Gray Luvisolic (wooded) soils that are low in sulphur, nitrogen and organic matter. The plots are the result of difficulties people had in trying to farm areas with Gray-Luvisolic soil after World War I.

"People moved into areas with soil from the Prairies and found they had little luck growing the crops they were accustomed to," notes Robertson.

The land the Breton Plots are on was purchased from the Flesher family. Two professors from the University of Alberta set out the original plots and began testing different cropping systems and fertilizers. Within a few years they discovered that the soil was low in nutrients, especially sulphur. With the use of 16-20-0 or 21-0-0 fertilizers production improved.

"The work at the plots was instrumental in many farmers staying on the Gray Luvisolic soil," says Robertson. "Many farmers were ready to give up and move on."

"Precision Farming - The Farming of the Future" is theme for this year's field day. The program starts at 10 a.m. and runs until 4 p.m.

The morning session will feature three speakers. Peter Crown, from the University of Alberta, will describe soil variability that occurs in a landscape. Dan Heaney, from Alberta Agriculture's soils and animal nutrition lab, will discuss the technologies available to farmers to allow them to cope with soil variability. Tom Goddard, a soil conservation specialist with Alberta

Agriculture, will comment on economic, environmental and management consequences of farming according to soil type.

After a sponsored lunch, participants will tour the plots and take part in an open, one-on-one discussion session.

"This will be the 64th field day conducted at the plots," says Robertson. "Traditionally, it has attracted around 100 people. We are looking forward to a good turnout again this year."

Breton is located 100 km southwest of Edmonton – west on Highway 39 and south on Highway 20. For more information on the tour, contact the Department of Soil Science at the University of Alberta, 492-3242 or 492-0109.

Contact: Jim Robertson
492-3242

George Fox fundraising is successful

4-H members from throughout Alberta raised \$3,500 for their various clubs and another \$3,500 for the 4-H Foundation of Alberta by selling cassette tapes and compact discs (CDs) featuring Canadian country music star and former 4-H member, George Fox.

"I'd like to congratulate George Fox and all the participating 4-H members, clubs and the 4-H Foundation for an outstanding effort," says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H programs specialist.

Final tallies show 1,750 units of Fox's *Mustang Heart* recording were sold between January 7 and May 15, 1994. The cassettes sold for \$14 and the CDs for \$17. The 4-H club making the sale and the 4-H Foundation of Alberta split \$4 for each unit sold.

Prizes for outstanding salesmanship were announced on June 4, 1994 in Calgary at 4-H on Parade. Kay Dee Munns, a resident of Craigmyle and member of the Rainbow Riders 4-H Club, sold a total of 51 units to lead the way. Her prize includes attending a George Fox concert, a backstage pass for the sound check and dinner with Fox. Christine Bonham of Delburne was the runner-up. She sold 31 units.

The Byemore Beef Club, led by Anita Mappin, was the winning club. The club sold an average of five units per member. As its prize, Fox will perform a 30-minute acoustic solo at one of the club's special functions. Each club member will also receive an autographed picture of Fox. The Strong Creek 4-H Club was a close second with a sales record of 4.6 units per member.

"This fundraising idea got its roots way back in August 1992 when Fox performed for a provincial 4-H audience at Showcase '92," says Ted Youck, head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch. "After his performance he approached us about a fundraising venture."

The idea became a reality in late 1993 and was officially kicked-off, with Fox in attendance, at the Provincial 4-H Leader's conference in January.

Funds raised by the 4-H Foundation of Alberta will be used for various projects. One project that will receive support is the Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre at Battle Lake. The centre's grand opening is being held on Thursday, July 28, 1994, during this year's Conservation Camp. Fox will be on hand for the opening ceremonies.

"The fundraising venture was extremely successful," says Stark. "George took a special interest in the project and 4-H is especially proud to be associated with him."

Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8510

New partnership for Ag in the Classroom

With the help of private industry, Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program will soon be expanding its resource materials to include information on farm chemicals and fertilizers.

"Ag in the Classroom will be assembling a package of resource materials for use by all of Alberta's Ag Ambassadors," says Betty Gabert, program co-ordinator. "The new materials can be developed as a result of a recent partnership with the Western Fertilizer and Chemical Dealers Association (WFCDA).

"The most exciting part of the whole deal is that the dealers association actually came looking for us," adds Gabert. "They liked what they saw in our program and decided to approach us with an offer of funding."

The Western Fertilizer and Chemical Dealers Association, made up of dealers, manufacturers, wholesalers, and service and equipment suppliers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and parts of the United States, first contacted Ag in the Classroom officials in February. The association then presented Gabert with a cheque for \$4,000 at a ceremony in Vermilion on May 30, 1994.

Association board member Garth Rowswell, who also operates Valley Fertilizer in Vermilion, made the presentation.

"The idea of supporting the Ag in the Classroom program was raised at our last annual meeting," says Rowswell. "We like the program and feel it can present fertilizer and chemical information to young people in an unbiased manner.

"Our association is concerned that industry's side of the environmental argument isn't being properly presented and that products of great value to the agriculture community could be lost if factual information is not made available," notes Rowswell. "The association wants people to base their opinions on facts and we are confident that Ag in the Classroom will present young people with the facts."

Gabert says that although WFCDA will be consulted on the strategy of the resource package, it will not in any way control the content.

"The resource package will deal with all facets of fertilizers and chemicals – what they are, how they are used, why they are

used, trends and alternatives," adds Gabert. "The partnership money will be used to help offset the costs of distributing this comprehensive resource tool."

Ag in the Classroom's fall newsletter will focus on the new resource materials and the package will be available to all Ag Ambassadors on request.

Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2402

Garth Rowswell
853-5070

Planning a perennial border

Planning a perennial border is an exciting process that will reward you with beauty and color for years to come says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The first step in planning is to assess the site where the border will be," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks.

When assessing the site, it's important to ask yourself if the site is full sun, shade or part shade, says Barkley. Some plants have to have shade, while others need full sun; morning sun is less intense than afternoon, and shadows change the amount of sun on a particular spot. Soil moisture and texture should also be considered.

"Is the soil wet, normal or dry? Plants can be very picky as to how wet or dry the soil is," explains Barkley. "Soil texture should also be studied. Clay soils can be wet and slow to warm up in the spring, while sandy soils are drier and warm quickly."

The addition of organic material, well-rotted manure, peat moss or compost, will help sandy soils to hold moisture and clay soils to drain better.

The direction of prevailing winds in the summer should also be looked at when planning, as wind can cause damage to the taller perennials like peonies and delphiniums. It can also damage delicate flowers through bruising and tearing.

Once the yard has been assessed, it's time to think about what style of border to plant.

"A traditional border is all herbaceous perennials while a mixed border allows for the addition of shrubs, annuals and bulbs," says Barkley. "Formal gardens are geometric while informal gardens have soft curves and a natural look."

Once the style of border has been decided, Barkley suggests drawing a scale plan on paper.

A well-planned border gives a feeling of peacefulness through balance she explains. This is achieved when the plants on either side of centre are similar in visual size – a clump of plants on one side can balance the visual weight of a larger plant on the other. Keeping the plants in scale with one another is also important.

Using finer textured plants to make a narrow border appear longer gives the eye more to look at. Barkley recommends using bold plants in a large border, and not in a small one, as too many may be hard for the eye to take in. Plants that are blue,

blue-green and violet in color will increase the size of a border yard, whereas red and orange decrease the border or yard size and advance.

It is important to remember that a perennial border is an evolving thing, says Barkley. Planting a new border a little at a time will help to cut down initial costs.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Agri-News Briefs

Peace Region Tours

Several tours are planned for the Peace Region over the summer months. The Municipal District (M.D.) of Greenview No. 16 (Valleyview) will be holding its annual agricultural tour on June 25th. The tour is being organized by the Debolt Agriculture Developers and M.D. No. 16. For more information, contact Norm Boulet, 524-4445. The Peace River Soil Conservation Association (Dawson Creek) is conducting a joint conservation trials tour with the Canola Council on July 8th. For more information, contact Joanne Peterson, (604) 782-3439. A tour is also planned for the Grande Prairie area as the Emerson Trail/Webber Creek joint tour with the Canola Council goes on July 12th. For more information, contact Daryl Switzer, 532-9722. The Northern Soil Conservation Association and Improvement District No. 23 are working together to host an agricultural tour in the La Crete area on July 13th. For more information, contact Dave Driedger, 928-2121. The tour in the Municipal District of Fairview No. 136 also goes on July 13th. It is sponsored by the Fairview Applied Research Association, the North Peace Forage Association, Fairview College and M.D. No. 136. For more information, contact Greg Griffin, 835-4903.

Regional meetings planned

The Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd. will be hosting regional meetings throughout the province during the month of June. The seven meetings are on Tuesday, June 14 in Magrath; Wednesday, June 15 in Rosebud; Thursday, June 16 in Bashaw; Friday, June 17 in Alliance; Monday, June 20 in Clandonald; Tuesday, June 21 in Morinville; and, Wednesday, June 22 in Nampa. All meetings are scheduled to begin 8 a.m. For more information, contact your respective seed cleaning plant.

REDA offers Co-operative Youth Program

Applications are now being accepted for the 1994 Co-operative Youth Program. Alberta youth, looking for an opportunity to develop and enhance their leadership skills, should consider the Rural Education and Development Association's (REDA) Co-operative Youth Program, held at the Goldeye Centre. There are three different seminars to choose from: teen (13 to 14 years of age), youth (15 to 17 years of age) and grad (16 to 19 years of age). Each seminar hosts programs one week in length during the months of July and August. For more information on the 1994 Co-operative Youth Program, contact Margaret Langford at 451-5959.

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA

June 20, 1994

JUL 26 1994

Farmers' Day Significant to Alberta

When Albertans sit down to dinner, chances are you'll be eating something raised, or grown on an Alberta farm or ranch. Beef, dairy products, grains, and legumes all come from the hands of the men and women who earn their living from the land.

"June 10, 1994 is Farmers' Day, a time to remember the tremendous contribution that agriculture and Alberta farmers make to our dinner tables, and to the provincial economy," said the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Walter Paszkowski.

The success of Alberta producers can be measured by the jobs and money generated by the agriculture and food industry. One in three jobs in Alberta is related to this industry. A good portion of all Canada's major crops are grown here in Alberta. More than half the barley and oats in Canada come from Alberta, as does one-quarter the wheat and one-third the canola. In 1993, Alberta accounted for 55 per cent of the total Canadian cattle slaughter and 64 per cent of Canada's total fed cattle production.

But as successful as this industry is today, Mr. Paszkowski said it's only the beginning. "My department is helping farmers. We are listening, we are acting. We are consulting with industry and the public, have pared down operations and tailored them to meet the demands of the future. We are also promoting research to help agriculture and food operations compete nationally and abroad."

Mr. Paszkowski said with fewer restrictions on global trade, there is even more potential for growth in this industry. In 1988, Alberta's agri-food exports to the U.S. totalled \$597 million. In 1992, they reached \$1.2 billion.

"Clearly," Mr. Paszkowski said, "Free trade works for agriculture. I like to say that agriculture is Alberta's future, not its past. And I say that because of the tremendous contribution agriculture and Alberta farmers make to Alberta's economy today, and the opportunity it offers to contribute even more in the future."

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus 427-2137 C.D. Radke 427-2145

May showers welcome

Alberta's total precipitation was above normal for the month of May, but the average temperature was still near normal, says an Alberta Agriculture weather resource specialist.

"These averages are based on data recorded at 54 Environment Canada climate stations across the province," says Peter Dzikowski. "The climate stations averaged 57.0 mm of precipitation, 12.1 mm above the 1961 to 1990 average."

Most of Alberta received above normal precipitation except for the far north. The Peace region reported between 20 and 50 mm. Central regions reported between 30 and 100 mm of precipitation, varying from 60 per cent of normal to 170 per cent above normal. The Southern region reported between 40 and 110 mm, about 80 per cent to 220 per cent of normal.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Queenstown received 111.3 mm, the most precipitation during May and about 220 per cent of its long term average.

"The May showers were welcome after the warm dry weather experienced in most of Alberta in March and April," says Dzikowski.

The average monthly temperature for May was 10.9 degrees. The long term average Alberta temperature for the same 54 stations in May is 10.0 °C. Alberta locations reported temperatures 0 to 2 degrees above normal.

The Crowsnest Pass reported 8.3°C, the coldest monthly average. In the rest of Alberta, Bow Island reported the warmest monthly temperature of 13.9°C, which is 1.5 degrees above normal.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Bulkier feed alternative for broiler breeders

Increasing the amount of feed fed to broiler parent stock may be a viable alternative for breeding birds says an Alberta Agriculture poultry specialist.

"The research indicates that we need to challenge the old way of thinking with rewards to feeding broiler breeders. Small quantities of high performance feeds make for an efficient system, but may not be optimal from a bird perspective," says Martin Zuidhof.

In his research, Zuidhof conducted a study designed to improve the well-being of the birds without adversely affecting bird productivity. The study was based on adding a low nutritive fibre to the feed so that the same levels of protein and energy would be consumed in a larger amount of feed over a longer period of time.

Over the last 50 years, there has been a remarkable improvement in broiler chicken production because of genetic selection and improved feed formulations. This may be great for the chick itself, but not so great for the parent. There is a strong negative relationship between the body size and reproductive performance in the female broiler breeder.

"The idea was to add non-nutritive bulk to the feed, allowing the bird's feed consumption to be more in line with its appetite. This improves their well-being," says Zuidhof. "It's like eating more celery. It fills you up and it doesn't make you fat."

The study showed that adding fibre to the diets increased the amount of time needed for the bird to consume its feed. The increased feed availability altered the relative levels of circulating white blood cells (H/L ratio). The H/L ratio was lower in treatments where the bird was fed diluted feed.

"This indicated that the stress associated with feed restriction had been alleviated somewhat by diet dilution," explains Zuidhof.

Zuidhof mentions diet dilution during the rearing period may also contribute to solving body weight uniformity problems during the

lay period. Chick production also increased substantially when the birds received a moderate level of dilution.

For more information on the study conducted by Zuidhof and Dr. Frank Robinson from the University of Alberta, Zuidhof can be contacted in Edmonton at 427-5320.

Contact: Martin Zuidhof
427-5320

FBMInet offers second link in Edmonton

A second Alberta link to the Farm Business Management Information Network (FBMInet) called FBMInet AB 2 (AGRIS) will now allow bulletin board users to key into Alberta Agricultural Research Institute information in Edmonton.

"From one perspective, callers from within the Edmonton dialing area will be able to call into the network toll-free, without incurring long distance charges," says Bruce Waldie, the FBMInet system operator in Olds. Most users pay telephone long distance charges when logging on to the network.

In the past, FBMInet users have had to call the Olds office to access the network. "By expanding the system to Edmonton, there will be closer access for users in northern Alberta," says Kent Racher, an Alberta Agriculture research officer. Racher is FBMInet AB 2's system operator in Edmonton.

"It will also increase the exposure and awareness of the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute's research reports and database across the province," says Waldie.

Some of the information that is now accessible on FBMInet AB 2 are Farming for the Future research reports and the Inventory of Canadian Agri-Food Research, says Racher. "Users can use key words to find information, download it on to their hard drive, and sign off the system, relatively quickly," he says. Currently, there are 1786 documents in the Agricultural Research Information System (AGRIS) database.

As an additional feature to FBMInet, users are able to tap into the daily Globalink futures reports, says Waldie.

Help is available to both new and experienced computer users. A quick access guide, a comprehensive FBMInet User Guide and a FBMInet starter kit are available from Waldie in Olds or Racher in Edmonton. The starter kit includes disks with shareware programs to access the computer bulletin board system, a communications program, compression software, a text editor and an offline mail reader.

"The addition of the AGRIS to the Canada-wide FBMInet makes it the 11th bulletin board system (BBS) to join the network," says Racher.

FBMInet may only be one year old, yet the system has generated over 54,000 calls, and has over 4800 users. You can access

FBMInet AB 2 (AGRIS) by calling 438-2209, or by accessing FBMI AB (Compu-Farm BBS) in Olds at 556-4104.

Contact: *Bruce Waldie* *Kent Racher*
556-4243 427-1956

20th annual Alberta Ram Test Station sale planned

The 20th Annual Alberta Ram Test Station Sale will be held in Olds, on Saturday, July 9th says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Over the 20 years that the sale has been held, it has gained a reputation for good stock and top prices," says Wray Whitmore, sheep specialist at the cattle and sheep branch. "Part of the reputation has come because of our method of evaluation. The stock in the sale is chosen on performance rather than looks."

Whitmore estimates the sale will feature 40 to 50 rams from six different breeds. The Dorset, Hampshire, Polypay, Rambouillet, Southdowns and Suffolk breeds will be represented.

The ram test started with 146 animals. Of the 146, half will be identified as above average with respect to growth. The above average group then must pass a rigorous physical cull before being approved for the sale.

"Only those rams with above average growth for their breed make it to the physical culling process," explains Whitmore. "The offering for this year's sale should be extremely strong as the rams are doing well on test."

Also available at the sale will be a limited number of yearling rams from the wool breeds test.

This year's sale is being held at the Olds College Horse Arena. The ram viewing starts at 10:30 a.m. and the sale begins at 1:00 p.m.

For more information on the sale, contact Wray Whitmore at 427-5083 or fax 427-1057.

Contact: *Wray Whitmore*
427-5083

4-Hers exchange provinces and lifestyle

While five Alberta 4-hers prepare for travel to Eastern Canada, five other 4-H families are planning a warm Alberta welcome to host delegates.

These ten are all part of the annual interprovincial exchange program sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada. "The program is always a lesson in travel and lifestyles for both the member and the 4-H family," says Marguerite Stark, 4-H programs specialist.

Three of Alberta's 4-H representatives will get a taste of the maritimes. Jody Wacowich of Redwater travels furthest east to Nova Scotia. Jodi Dahlgren of Wainwright is heading to Prince Edward Island and Gary Sim of Tees heads for New Brunswick.

Staying in central Canada is Aleisha Curtis of Heisler visiting Ontario, and Kerri Solick of Lacombe will visit Manitoba.

All will leave for their host province on July 5 following a send-off banquet in Calgary, July 4. Each will stay with two host families for the remainder of their two week trip. The delegates will return home on July 18.

The five delegates were chosen to participate in the exchange at the annual provincial selections program earlier this spring. Trip awards are based on 4-H and community involvement as well as interpersonal skills.

The very day the Alberta delegates prepare for their flights, select families will welcome five out-of-province 4-H members for four days of touring Calgary, Banff and the surrounding area. On July 8 the delegates will attend the opening festivities of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede. The following day includes a Welcoming Stampede Breakfast in Airdrie where they will meet the Alberta 4-H Council.

"The Royal Bank will also be making a White Hat Presentation at the breakfast on July 9," says Stark. "The event poses as a great opportunity for all host families to show the Alberta lifestyle to other Canadians."

Kristi Gardiner of Crystal City, Manitoba will stay with the Richard and Leona Petherbridge family of Bon Accord (921-4120). Gerald and Maria Kujala of Eckville (746-5642) are hosting Lisa Fisher from Thornton, Ontario. New Brunswick delegate Jonathon Kilpatrick of Hampton will spend his exchange with Calvin and Judy Bishell and family of Veteran (575-2259). Canning, Nova Scotia's Heather Smith will stay with Lynda and Harry Hewson and family of Delia (364-2298). Doug and Joan Hadwin and family from Consort (577-2122) welcome Kurt Duncan of North River, Prince Edward Island.

The five delegates will return to their homes, as they leave Alberta on July 18.

Contact: <i>Marguerite Stark</i>	<i>Jody Wacowich</i>
948-8510	942-4168
<i>Aleisha Curtis</i>	<i>Jodi Dahlgren</i>
889-2139	842-2353
<i>Kerri Solick</i>	<i>Gary Sim</i>
885-4348	747-2135

New commercial "U-pick" operation video available

If you're looking to diversify, a new video recently released by Alberta Agriculture's Multi-Media branch may be just the one you want to pick up.

The new tape, entitled "Pick of the Crop," looks at turning your berry patch from a backyard hobby to a commercial U-pick operation. And it does so in a simple, straightforward and entertaining manner.

June 20, 1994

"Today, more and more Alberta farmers are discovering the value of berry fruits as an alternative crop," says multi-media branch information officer Ken Blackley. "This video is a good place to start for those who might be thinking about getting in on this potentially lucrative market."

Selling U-pick berries is really the ultimate in eliminating the middle man. The consumer is the harvester, packager and transporter of the product. The operator's job is to grow a top-quality product and then to attract the customers. The video focuses on both aspects of the producer's role.

"The tape covers a lot of ground, from shelterbelt location and site preparation to customer service and the importance of proper signs," says Blackley. "All in all, it's a top-notch resource."

"Pick of the Crop" may be borrowed from any Alberta Agriculture district office or by writing the Multi-Media Library, 7000-113 street, Edmonton, T6H-5T6.

Contact: **Ken Blackley**
427-2127

Agri-News Briefs

Low maintenance landscaping courses

The University of Alberta's Faculty of Extension and the City of Edmonton's Public Works Department are co-hosting two courses on low maintenance landscaping for the homeowner. The first course, *Ecoscaping: Low Maintenance Landscaping*, will be held on Saturday, July 9. It covers landscape design, plant selection, soil conditioning, mulches and efficient irrigation to produce an attractive, low input and low maintenance landscape. The second course, *Perennials for the Prairies*, is scheduled for Sunday, July 10. Participants will learn which perennials are hardy and readily grown in our climate, how to design perennial beds and borders, basic techniques for starting new perennials and how to care for and maintain perennial beds. Both courses are being held at the University Extension Centre and run from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Enrolment is limited and those registering should do so before June 24. The course fees are \$65 per person, per course. To register or for more course information, contact the University Extension Centre at 492-3029 or fax 492-1216.

Lakeland College summer events

Lakeland College in Vermilion has several schools planned for mid-July. A beginner riding school is planned for July 11 to 15. Another school is called, "I Wanna be a Cowboy". It is a cattle events school which runs from July 18 to 22. For more information on either of these schools, contact Chris Spasoff at 1-800-661-4127.

Colonial Days boasts 90th Anniversary

Several breeds shows will be featured at the 90th anniversary of Colonial Days held in Lloydminster, July 13 to 16, 1994. Hog Fest kicks off the fair on Wednesday, July 13. The Farm Outlook, Vision of the '90s Heifer show, \$1000 Market Lamb Jackpot and the Junior Shepherd Futurity and Show are all scheduled for Thursday, July 14. Also on that same day will be the Classic Steer Stake, offering \$12,000 in prizes. Scheduled for Friday, July 15 is the Junior All-Breeds Beef Show. The Drafthorse and Lighthorse shows will continue throughout the event. The final event held on the last day will be the Llama Fiesta. All programs will be held in the Saskatchewan Building on the Lloydminster Exhibition Grounds. For more information contact Val Hanson, Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition Association at (306) 825-5571.

4-H Operation Enterprise

Operation Enterprise is an extensive business management seminar designed to help 4-H delegates become stronger managers and leaders. Two Alberta 4-H members will travel to Lloydminster, Saskatchewan on July 6 to participate in the American-based program. Regan Wojcik of High River and Nathan Carter of Innisfree will be spending 10 days in small group discussions, workshops and one-on-one meetings with top executives from the business world. Both members were selected at the annual provincial 4-H selections program. The Alberta 4-H delegate participation in Operation Enterprise is sponsored by AEC Pipelines and Nelson Lumber. The two members will return to their homes on July 15. For more information on the Operation Enterprise, contact Marguerite Stark, 4-H programs specialist in Airdrie at 948-8510.

AGRI-NEWS

June 27, 1994

CANADIANA

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Alberta Agriculture moves to specialized service

Specialized service is the focus Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development is moving towards by delivering specific, quality information to the farming, processing and agribusiness communities says the assistant deputy minister of field services.

Help in defining these specialized roles came through the Creating Tomorrow industry consultation process, farmer focus groups and the public consultation meetings for Alberta Agriculture's business plan says Les Lyster.

"We've listened carefully to both farmers' needs and those needs within the industry. The move to specialization at the district offices is geared specifically to meeting those needs," says Lyster.

The specialist positions focus on nine information areas: crops, beef, pork, farm management, marketing, rural development, engineering, food processing development and 4-H.

"We want to ensure Alberta farmers and agri-businesses receive unbiased and timely information on specific subject matter. Specialization will help to meet the more demanding information and problem solving needs of our local agricultural industry both today and tomorrow," he says.

"Information and technology transfer will become more integrated, and tailored to meet individual producer needs. Farmers today want to know how certain elements of the industry affect their operations, in their part of the province."

Training and development is also a top priority and allows specialists to expand their level of specialization and knowledge. This, in turn, helps people in the industry to develop skills and knowledge in order to maintain competitiveness and sustainability.

"The bottom line," says Lyster, "is specialized information that is easily accessible, and is delivered with top notch customer service."

Although not all types of specialists will be located in each district office, they will be accessible through each district office by phone. Calling or visiting any district office puts you in touch with any of the specialists. Clients and businesses are encouraged to use the toll-free Government RITE telephone system by calling 310-0000.

Arrangements can also be made for one-on-one personal consultations (see attached maps for district office locations).

Farm calls are also an important part of delivering quality service says Lyster.

For more information, contact any one of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's regional directors: Don Young, 381-5130, Lethbridge; Alan Hall, 340-7611, Red Deer; Ralph Berkan, 853-8106, Vermilion; John Knapp, 674-8264, Barrhead; or, Yvonne Grabowsky, 835-2295, Fairview.

Contact: Les Lyster
427-2440

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development

Regional and District Offices



Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development

District Specialists, June 21, 1994¹

by Location and Speciality Area

Airdrie – 948-8551

Gordon Hutton – Crops
Ted Darling – Farm Management
Rich Smith – Agriculture Engineering

Athabasca – 675-2252

Trevor Yurchak – Beef
Gary Berger – Crops

Barrhead – 674-8213

Ken Lopetinsky – Crops
John VanKeulen – Beef
Bob Winchell – Farm Management
Allan Macaulay – Crops
Jocelyn McKinnon – 4-H
Wayne Winchell – Agriculture Engineering
Bert Dening – Pork

Brooks – 362-1212

Gordon Frank – Crops
Lee Melville – Marketing

Bonnyville – 826-3388

Jay Byer – Crops

Camrose – 679-1210

Don Lobay – Crops
Bjorne Berg – Crops
Tennis Marx – Beef
Marion Williams – Rural Development

Cardston – 653-5130

Bob Lyons – Crops
Jim Hansen – Beef

Claresholm – 625-1445

Tracy Dow – Crops
Ron Woolf – Farm Management
Lynne Neiman – Rural Development

Coronation – 578-3970

Curtis Weeks – Crops
Vacant – Beef

Drayton Valley – 542-5368

Yvonne Love – Beef

Crumheller – 823-1675

Greg Urichuk – Crops
Doug Cornell – Marketing

Evansburg – 727-3673

Fred Young – Crops

Fairview – 835-2241

Dale Seward – Crops
Trevor Jones – Beef
George Monner – Farm Management
Ginette Keglowsch – 4-H
Vacant – Agriculture Engineering

Falher – 837-2211

Hector Goudreau – Crops
Vacant – Crops

Fort Vermilion – 927-3712

Vacant – Crops

Foremost – 867-3606

Michael Clawson – Crops

Grande Prairie – 538-5285

Paul LaFlamme – Crops
Vacant – Marketing
Dennis Lowry – Beef
Susan Meyer – Rural Development
Karen Goad – Food Processing Development

Hanna – 845-5500

Cathie Erichsen – Crops
Delyn Jensen – Beef
Laura Lee Billings – Rural Development

High Prairie – 523-6500

Freeman Iwasiuk – Beef

High River – 652-8300

Andrea Church – Crops
Pat Ramsey – Beef

Innisfail – 227-6565

Murray Hartman – Crops

Lac La Biche – 623-5218

Harvey Yoder – Crops

Lacombe – 782-3301

Neil Miller – Crops
Doug Walkey – Farm Management
Lynn Stegman – Rural Development

Lamont – 895-2219

Emile deMilliano – Crops
Vacant – Marketing

Leduc – 986-8985

Roger Andreiuk – Crops
George Rock – Farm Management
Cindy Bishop – Rural Development

Lethbridge – 381-5237

Beata Lees – Crops
Dale Zoebell – Beef
Barb Vanden Bosch – Rural Development
Milo Barfus – 4-H
Vacant – Pork
Karen Hoover – Food Processing Development

Manning – 836-3351

John Huffman – Crops
Margurite Theissen – Rural Development

Medicine Hat – 529-3616

Dave Spencer – Crops
Brian Palichuk – Beef
Brenda Lea McPhail – Rural Development

Morinville – 939-4351

John Hladky – Crops
Janice McGregor – Rural Development

Olds – 556-4220

Mark Olson – Crops
Don Milligan – Beef
Kathy Lowther – Rural Development

Oyen – 664-3899

John Ruschowski – Crops

Provost – 753-6871

Agnes Whiting – Crops

Red Deer – 340-5364

Rob Hand – Beef
Ted Ford – Farm Management
Robert Borg – Agriculture Engineer
Marvin Solomons – Pork
Joyce Lencucha – Food Processing Development

Rimbey – 843-2201

Grant Lastiwka – Crops

Rocky Mountain House – 845-8200

Ken Ziegler – Beef

Sangudo – 785-2266

Lloyd Geibelhaus – Beef

Sedgewick – 384-3737

Vacant – Crops

Smoky Lake – 656-3613

Grant Gillund – Crops
Don Christensen – Beef
Kathleen Ozmun – Rural Development

Spirit River – 864-3597

Garry Coy – Crops
Linda Hawk Sellin – Rural Development

Stettler – 742-7500

Brent Flaten – Crops
Jeff Millang – Marketing
Carmen Andrew – Rural Development
Doug Norman – 4-H

St. Paul – 645-6301

Kirsty Piquette – Crops
Terry Holmgren – Beef
Sharon Stollery – Rural Development

Stony Plain – 963-6101

Ty Faechner – Crops
Gail Lemke – Rural Development

Strathmore – 934-3355

Don Poisson – Crops
Brenda Ralston-Chalmers – Beef
Maureen Bolen – Rural Development

Taber – 223-7907

Jack Payne – Crops
Graham Gilchrist – Farm Management
Blair Shaw – Crops

Three Hills – 443-8525

Ken King – Crops
Ellen Frombach – Rural Development

Valleyview – 524-3301

Vacant – Crops
Suzanne Randall – Rural Development

Vegreville – 632-5400

Kent MacDonald – Crops
John Erdman – Farm Management
Glynis Falloon – Rural Development

Vermilion – 853-8101

Vacant – Crops
Josie VanLent – Beef
Shane Dobson – Marketing
Leona Reynolds-Zayak – Rural
Development
Irene Wenger – Pork
Brian Kennedy – Agriculture Engineering

Vulcan – 485-2236

Scott Meers – Crops
Mary Ellen Norgard – Rural Development

Wainwright – 842-7540

Ross Hutchison – Crops
Harry Brook – Beef
Brenda Tangen – Rural Development

Westlock – 349-4465

Bill Chapman – Crops
Rod Carlyon – Beef
Kerry Engel – Rural Development

Wetaskiwin – 361-1240

Ron Hockridge – Crops
Brian Koberstein – Beef

¹ To date, some district specialist positions haven't been filled.

New Farmers' Advocate selected

Farmers in Alberta have a new voice to represent them as they deal with the agriculture and energy industries, neighbours and local governments.

After a province-wide competition, Wallace Stanley Daley of Edmonton has been selected as the province's newest Farmers' Advocate of Alberta says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister.

Daley was a farmer and rancher for over 30 years in the Granum area in southern Alberta. He attended Olds College in 1951-52, and was a volunteer leader of the 4-H Beef Club in Fort McLeod.

Active in local government, Daley was elected to the Municipal District of Willow Creek Council in 1971 and served until 1987. He was the reeve from 1979 to 1987. Elected as member of the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C) board, he served from 1981 to 1987. He was the association's president when he retired. He was also the Alberta Assessment Appeal Board chairman from 1988 to 1994.

"Throughout his years as a municipal councillor and member of the AAMD&C, Wallace Daley has consistently represented the concerns of his fellow producers, as well as those of the rural community at large," says Paszkowski. "Such experience, combined with his many years of farming, will serve Alberta's producers well as he takes over the reins of the Office of the Farmers' Advocate."

Wallace Daley officially begins his new duties as the Farmers' Advocate of Alberta on July 1, 1994. He can be contacted in Edmonton at 427-2433.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus
427-2137

Wheat streak mosaic outbreak

An unusually high incidence of the viral disease wheat streak mosaic (WSM) has been reported in spring wheat fields across southern Alberta this season says an Alberta Agriculture crop protection specialist.

"WSM has been a sporadic problem in wheat crops in southern Alberta for almost five decades," says Ron Howard, head of the crop protection and utilization section at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Center in Brooks. "However, we've recently had numerous cases reported to us and also to cereal and oilseed specialists here in the south."

The WSM virus is spread by the wheat curl mite. The tiny mite can be spread by the wind over short distances, localizing the disease. Farmers should look for yellow streaks on the leaves, an initial symptom. Affected plants appear stunted and will produce fewer kernels which are often badly shrivelled.

"Infection during the early stages of crop growth often can cause death of the plants and reduce yield by as much as 80 per cent.

The mites carry the virus internally and transfer it as they feed on the plant. They can't survive on ripened plants. So far this year, high levels of WSM have not been observed in winter wheat," he says.

With no known chemical control for the WSM mite, cultural methods are the only effective way to limit it and the virus says Howard. He recommends not seeding winter wheat until all the spring cereals in adjacent fields have ripened.

"Otherwise, the mites will move off the spring wheat into the winter wheat as it emerges from the ground," explains Howard.

"The destruction of volunteer wheat one to two weeks prior to seeding either spring or winter wheat is also important since these plants can act as sources of infection throughout the new crop," he adds.

Discing a field down because of WSM may be necessary if the disease is severe. "The decision to turn under an infected crop should be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account how much of the field is affected by the disease and the developmental stage of the crop.

"In many cases, the disease is limited to the edge of the crop, and losses shouldn't be great. The important factor to keep in mind is that early infection generally results in higher losses, compared to infection at later stages of development," says Howard.

Producers should be aware the hard red spring wheat cultivar Laura is very susceptible to WSM and shouldn't be planted in areas where winter wheat is commonly grown.

Columbus and Oslo, two other hard red spring wheat cultivars, and the durum cultivar Plenty, although susceptible to the disease, generally suffer less yield loss than most other spring wheats.

Barley, oats, corn and many cultivated grasses are also hosts for wheat streak mosaic virus and wheat curl mites, but wheat is really the only crop seriously affected by WSM in Alberta.

For more information on the wheat streak mosaic outbreak in southern Alberta, contact Howard in Brooks at 362-3391, Ieuan Evans in Edmonton at 427-7098, or Bob Conner in Lethbridge at 327-4591 (Ext. 302).

Contact: Dr. Ron Howard Dr. Ieuan Evans
362-3391 427-7098
Dr. Bob Conner
327-4591, Ext. 302

New multi-media catalogue now available

New titles and added collections are part of the latest edition of Alberta Agriculture's multi-media catalogue.

"The new publication follows the same basic format as the last catalogue, but features a number of improvements," says Ken Blackley, multi-media branch information officer. "We've added

June 27, 1994

some new categories, re-numbered many old titles and generally made the catalogue easier for people to use and find what they want."

The catalogue lists all videos, films and slide-tapes available for loan from the central multi-media library. As well as listing many new titles, the 1994-95 catalogue boasts collections added to the main library from the department's 4-H branch and the farm safety program.

"We've added over 60 4-H videos alone," notes Blackley. "There are also new titles in subjects areas ranging through human resource management, consumer trends and estate planning. In fact, we've got something on just about everything to do with the business of agriculture and food."

The catalogue also lists audio-visual equipment available to staff or anyone who holds meetings at the department's headquarters, the J.G. O'Donoghue in Edmonton.

For a copy of the catalogue, write Multi-Media Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Multi-media branch is the new name of the department's broadcast media branch. The multi-media library was formerly the film library. Both name changes more accurately describe the branch's activities and resources.

Contact: Ken Blackley
427-2127

Big Sky Country welcomes 4-H delegates

Starting July 8 four Alberta 4-H members will explore Montana's Big Sky Country as they travel to their destination of Bozeman and the Montana 4-H Congress.

"The yearly congress is an opportunity for the selected delegates to participate in workshops, educational programs as well as exploring the differences in American 4-H projects," says Marguerite Stark, provincial 4-H programs specialist. The Congress runs July 12 to 15.

The delegates chosen to represent Alberta this year are Patricia Lalonde of Medicine Hat, Trevor Luchka of Vimy, Shane Menzak of Vegreville and Lisa Wesner of Drumheller. All four were awarded the trip at the annual provincial 4-H Selections.

Karen Simpson, Alberta Agriculture's regional 4-H assistant from Barrhead, and leader-chaperone Helen Andrews of Sherwood Park will travel with the group.

While at the Congress, the Alberta 4-Hers will observe various 4-H project competitions from public speaking to photography contests.

Delegates, says Stark, will also spend four days travelling throughout the state, visiting historical and agricultural points-of-interest.

The delegates will return to Alberta on July 17.

Contact:	Marguerite Stark	Lisa Wesner	Shane Menzak
	948-8510	823-5001	658-2128
	Patricia Lalonde	Trevor Luchka	
	646-5868	349-2268	

Agri-News Briefs

Fairview College hosts agriculture open house

Fairview College's Agricultural Technology Department is hosting an open house in conjunction with the Fairview and District Agricultural Field Day, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesday July 13. In addition to exotic and domestic live animal displays, there will be a farm machinery and equipment trade fair in the Hawker Pavilion; displays of seeds, grains and grasses; hands-on computer demonstrations with agriculture-specific software; and, horse-drawn wagon tours of the campus farm. For more information on the open house, contact Melanie Hammond at 835-6630.

Women in Agriculture International Conference

The Women in Agriculture International Conference will be held at Melbourne University in Victoria, Australia, July 1 to 3, 1994. For more information, contact the networking coordinator (International Conference), Department of Agriculture, 117 Johnson Street, MAFRA 3860, Victoria, Australia; or call (951) 47 1533 or FAX at (051) 47 3078. [To dial directly, start with 011, then Australia's country code 61.]

AGRI-NEWS

July 4, 1994

District office still your info source

With recent changes from restructuring and specialization, you'll find specialists instead of district agriculturists in Alberta Agriculture's district offices, but those offices are still the first place you can go for any type of agricultural information.

"Access to services and information are still available from all the 52 district offices," says Yvonne Grabowsky, director of the Peace region.

"Some clients have the wrong impression of the move to specialization. They think they have to travel to the particular specialist they want or need to talk to," she adds. "But they don't have to. All they need to do is come in to their local office and they'll be put in contact with the specialist who can provide the quality information they need."

Changing the roles of district office staff – from generalists to specialists – means staff can offer more in-depth information to farming, processing and agribusiness communities. Every district has at least one specialist, but specialists aren't limited by district boundaries.

"Accessibility was a priority when this new system was developed," says Grabowsky. "That means you, the customer, is still first in our minds and that our staff will do the work of either putting you in direct contact with the specialist or the specialist in direct contact with you."

"In essence we do the referral work – saving you time and money – and you don't have to drive to a neighboring office to get the information you want."

That contact varies from phone calls and office visits, to farm calls and producer meetings. Offices continue to offer quality service with a referral based emphasis.

For example, a farmer comes to the Manning district office with a question about forage crops. The nearest forage crop specialist is in Falher. The customer could call Falher or leave a number for the forage specialist to call him. A farm call or a meeting in the Manning office could be arranged if necessary.

"One thing we've done to increase accessibility is to make space for visiting specialists in the district offices. A vacant office is set aside to be used by a visiting specialist to meet with customers," notes Grabowsky.

Access is enhanced through referral systems. Since the office restructuring changes are recent, district staff are still putting these lists together. The Peace region has two different systems to add to efficient accessibility.

Every Monday morning administrative support staff in the region receive a complete day-by-day calendar of the week listing where each specialist will be. This makes contacting a particular specialist easier as well as scheduling office and farm visits.

"Our region's support staff also saw another need," notes Grabowsky. "They took the initiative themselves to put together a referral directory listing topic area strengths of each of the specialists."

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

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For example, a crop specialist has an extensive knowledge about herbicide injury. Knowing that, the front line people can send customers to this specialist rather than one whose strength is in another area.

Office restructuring also means a larger role for administrative support staff says Grabowsky. "They truly are front-line now. They'll need to ask more questions of the customer so they direct them to the most appropriate specialist. So, please remember that when you get asked an extra question or two when you come into or call one of our district offices.

"We're also confident that with specialization our department's customers will have greater access to the most-up-to date information," says Grabowsky. "Specialists can concentrate on their particular speciality, so can build a focused in-depth knowledge base instead of a broad general knowledge base."

Referrals can go beyond the department's offices to colleges, farm and commodity groups, agri-food businesses and the federal agriculture department. "That is a two-way exchange, because those same institutions and organizations will also refer people to us," she says.

Contact: Yvonne Grabowsky
835-2291

If customers need pulse or forage information, then I can direct them to the best specialist, or the right specialist to them."

Because specialists aren't limited to district or even regional boundaries, the referral system can link a particular specialist in any part of the province to an Alberta Agriculture customer in any other part of the province. Skoworodko had to do just that recently.

A Bonanza area producer called with a question about growing poppies for their seeds. His family in Saskatchewan had grown the flower and harvested seeds to use in cooking. Could he grow them here? Was there a specialty market he could grow for? What other information was there?

Skoworodko called Beata Lees, whose particular speciality is special crops, in Lethbridge giving her the customer's phone number.

Referrals aren't necessarily to a person. Sometimes customers can get what they need from a department publication or video. And sometimes, the referral Skoworodko makes is outside Alberta Agriculture. During the spring garden season backyard pest calls have been directed to local nurseries and garden centres.

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Connecting Spirit River to Lethbridge

A question about growing poppy seeds sent Donna Skoworodko looking for the right specialist for a local farmer to talk with.

Skoworodko, who has been a secretary in Alberta Agriculture's Spirit River district office for the last decade, has answered telephone calls by the bushel over the years. Most times calls went directly to the district agriculturist or district home economist. Sometimes she'd refer customers to a neighboring district office or a regional specialist.

This spring's restructuring and a move to specialists in district offices changed the jobs in those offices. Instead of a generalist – district agriculturalist and district home economist – the 52 district offices now have at least one specialist. Their expertise is in one of nine areas: crops, beef, pork, marketing, farm management, engineering, 4-H, rural development and agri-food.

The role of administrative support staff such as Skoworodko has changed as well. Their job is more front-line. They'll deal more indepth with customers who call and visit their office, acting as the major link to the right Alberta Agriculture specialist, or other expert, customers may need to talk to.

Skoworodko says the change isn't large. She makes more referrals – at least five every day. She also has an expanded list of who she links customer to. Previously when district agriculturists were out on farm calls and for extension courses, she often referred calls that needed an immediate answer to a neighboring office.

"Now I go a step further by asking callers about their specific needs," she says. "Our office crops specialist's expertise is soils.

Early birds get the trees

Now is the time to order trees and shrubs for windbreaks and shelterbelts to avoid disappointment says Alberta Agriculture's shelterbelt specialist.

"Currently we have a good supply of all varieties except Scots pine," says Brendan Casement of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

The centre began taking orders on June 1 and accepts applications up to a November 1 deadline. Orders are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. "So, people who order early are almost certain to get what they want," notes Casement.

Ordering trees should also be easier. New applications are easier to fill out. All plants will be bundled in 10s, rather than some in 25s and some in 10s. Instead of requesting a certain number of trees, applicants state the length of their shelterbelt and nursery staff assign the correct number of bundles. Applicants can also say where they want to pick up their trees.

"Although it's early in the season, it appears there will be a good supply of all plants, including poplars and willows but excluding the Scots pine, for next spring," adds Casement. One factor is moisture.

"This spring it has rained at the right times on the nursery," he says. "In the past two years we've had low production from lack of rainfall."

Trees for some field shelterbelts are free through a federal/provincial program. These windbreaks must be a straight

row at least one half a kilometre (one-third of a mile) long and be placed to protect soils or crops from wind damage.

Six tree varieties are available for this windbreak program. They are Northwest poplar, acute leaf willow, green ash, dogwood, caragana and white spruce.

"This program's field shelterbelts trees aren't available for a windbreak to protect buildings or livestock," notes Casement. "However, you can choose and buy from 26 varieties of trees and shrubs to protect your farmstead and livestock enclosures."

Casement recommends using a department publication, "Shelterbelt Varieties for Alberta", for help in choosing the right tree or shrub. The publication is available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

"Different trees and shrubs have their own requirements such as moisture, tolerance to salt or alkaline soils, and insect and disease susceptibility. Different plants will behave – grow – differently at the same site," Casement says.

Contact: *Brendan Casement*
422-1789

Planning adds to shelterbelt benefits

Farmers who want to plant field or farmstead shelterbelts should be planning for next year right now says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Choosing the shelterbelt location is one of the first steps. It's important because the site should be prepared a year before the seedling trees are planted.

"We recommend that the strip where you'll plant your tree seedlings be cultivated for a summer, then planted the next spring. This is for weed control," says Brendan Casement of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

Location must be selected carefully to maximize the benefits of putting in a windbreak he adds. "A field shelterbelt can provide at least three conservation benefits, but you have to take into consideration prevailing winds, the length of the shelterbelt and even the type of tree for the particular location."

Information on shelterbelts is available through Alberta Agriculture district offices. This includes the publication, "Shelterbelt Varieties for Alberta". Six varieties of trees for field windbreaks are available free of charge through a federal/provincial program. Some conditions apply.

Conservation benefits from field shelterbelts include reduced soil erosion and crop damage from wind. As well, a shelterbelt helps retain moisture. Trees traps and hold snow increasing moisture for crop growth. They also reduce moisture loss from evaporation.

Farmstead shelterbelts also require planning. "In particular, you must leave enough room for all your buildings and work areas, plus allow some room for expansion," notes Casement.

Farmers can purchase 26 different trees and shrubs for farmstead shelterbelts. Order forms for both free and priced trees are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: *Brendan Casement*
422-1789

New members named to Agriculture and Food Council

Six new members will bring their wide range of experiences and knowledge to the Agriculture and Food Council's mandate of guiding and leading Alberta's agriculture and food industry.

The new members are Malcolm Barr, Eugene Dextrase, Donald Fluney, Roger King, Paul Murphy and Larry Sears. Barr is a chartered accountant and Camrose Regional Exhibition president. Dextrase is a grain and oilseed producer from the Peace River region and an Alberta Canola Producers Commission board director. Fluney, currently vice-president of the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA), runs a mixed farming operation northeast of Vermilion. King, currently an Alberta Poultry Council member, is the manager of the Broiler Board. Murphy is the Alberta Food Processors Association president. Stavelly cattleman Sears is the Alberta Cattle Commission chairman. Each new council member was chosen for their industry expertise and knowledge, as well as their proven ability to promote positive change and flexibility with others in working toward a common purpose in Creating Tomorrow.

"Our objective as a council is to have a membership which reflects the breadth and depth of Alberta's agriculture and food industry," says Jim Waters, newly elected council chair. "Our members come to the council as representatives of the whole industry, rather than to advance the interests of any particular group," he adds.

Council members attend five or six meetings a year plus any council initiatives. They are appointed for a three-year term. The six newest members joined their 16 other council colleagues at its year end meeting last month. **[See attached list of council members.]**

The Council promotes Alberta's agriculture industry as globally competitive, profitable, environmentally sustainable and valuing its people. This vision was defined during the 1992-93 Creating Tomorrow stakeholder's consultation. The council concept also came from the Creating Tomorrow process.

Council members identify obstacles to industry success, act as a sounding board and advisor to industry and government, and encourage the formation of strategic alliances and partnerships in the industry and government to move closer to the Creating Tomorrow vision.

The five outgoing council members are Phil Dixon, Allan Fraser, Ernest Laboucane, George Shoepp and Henry Van Zeggelaar.

For more information on the Agriculture and Food Council and its members, contact Barb Stroh, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development at 427-2417, or Jim Waters at 730-3511.

Contact: Barb Stroh Jim Waters
427-2417 730-3511

Agriculture and Food Council Members, June 1994

Jim Waters, Canada Safeway, Calgary [chair]
Ed Knash, Toronto Dominion Bank, Edmonton [vice-chair, finance]
Ken Stickland, KenAgra Management Services [vice-chair, planning]
Ed Tyrchniewicz, University of Alberta, Edmonton [vice-chair, operations]
Garnet Altwasser, Lakeside Farm Industries, Brooks
Malcolm Barr, Camrose Regional Exhibition, Camrose
Ralph Christian, Executive Director AARI, Edmonton
Eugene Dextrase, producer, High Level
Pat Durin, producer, Kathryn
John Ewasiw, United Food and Commercial Workers, Edmonton
Donald Fluency, producer, Dewberry
Lorrie Jespersen, producer, Barrhead
Roger King, Alberta Poultry Council, Edmonton
Ron Leonhardt, producer, Drumheller
Paul Murphy, Alberta Food Processors Association, Edmonton
Doug Radke, Deputy Minister Alberta Agriculture, Edmonton
Ken Rempel, producer, Tofield
Larry Sears, producer, Stavelly
Bernard Sonntag, Agriculture Canada Research Station, Lethbridge
Ardi Talsma, producer, Blackfalds
Bryan Walton, Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, Edmonton
Ian Wood, producer, Taber
Betty Young, Wings Foods of Alberta, Edmonton
Secretary to the council: Barb Stroh, Policy Secretariat, Alberta Agriculture Edmonton, 427-2417

Alberta can compete at free trade

Alberta's agriculture minister and the federal agriculture deputy minister may not always be on the same side of agriculture issues, but Walter Paszkowski and Raymond Protti agree Alberta can compete at free trade.

Canadian agri-food exports to the United States have increased by about \$4 billion since 1988, reaching \$7.3 billion last year. In Alberta, that figure is even more dramatic, more than doubling from 1988's \$553 million to \$1.3 billion last year.

"Clearly, our agri-food industry does well under freer trade agreements," Protti said at the kick-off of the "New Realities, New

Opportunities" conference on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) held recently in Camrose.

Protti listed some of the benefits these new trade agreements will offer. It includes a more stable environment for investment, more rapid income growth worldwide and growth in value-added products.

Paszkowski adds to the list his hope that the GATT will help the grain industry. "Both the United States and the European Community will have to reduce export subsidies by more than 40 per cent from current levels. This should give a much-needed boost to grain prices, in the order of 25 per cent or more."

Despite the positive boost that the GATT is expected to give the economy, Julius Katz, former chief U.S. negotiator for the NAFTA and negotiator in the Uruguay Round of GATT, warned participants that both the U.S. and Canada need to be open to further negotiation in agriculture and food.

"There are disturbing indications of disagreements, especially on agricultural issues, which could have unravelling effects on the agreement even before it enters into force," says Katz. In the fifth year of the agreement, further agricultural negotiations are scheduled to reduce trade barriers and subsidies.

Bill Miner, trade consultant and senior research associate at the Centre for Trade Policy and Law in Ottawa, says both the GATT and NAFTA should benefit Canadian farm and food sectors, but policy changes are necessary.

"Farm support policies, transportation, handling and marketing systems must be adjusted to operate competitively in an open market environment," says Miner. He points out that main farm programs in both Canada and the U.S. currently fail the GATT "Green Box" test. However, if necessary changes are made, Canada and Alberta will benefit.

"The results should eventually allow markets, rather than government interventions, to direct agricultural production and trade," he adds. This is a goal the provincial and federal governments are striving for as they try to create a new whole-farm safety net for Canada.

Paszkowski talked about several policy issues federal and provincial governments will need to work on together to achieve this goal. His list includes changes to the WGTA and the Canadian Wheat Board as well as taking down interprovincial trade barriers.

"We must remove the constraints that industry says interfere with its ability to make effective use of the opportunities in the market place," Paszkowski says.

Both Protti and Paszkowski emphasize the lead role industry must take in capitalizing on the opportunities. They see government's role as limited and as a facilitator. "And sometimes, admittedly, it means getting out of the way," says Protti.

The conference was the first of several initiatives that the Agriculture and Food Council is organizing to bring members of the agri-food industry together to help achieve the goals of

Creating Tomorrow. Approximately 280 producers, processors, marketers and others in the agri-food business or support sectors attended the June conference in Camrose.

Contact: Barb Stroh Rhonda Wehrhahn
427-2417 427-5359

People, technology future of agri-food industry

More technology. More training. Better use of technology and people. These themes came up again and again at a recent trade conference in Camrose. "New Realities, New Opportunities" focused on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and featured the effects and opportunities created by the two new agreements. Several prominent trade and economic figures were conference speakers.

"There is not nearly enough emphasis on training and empowering people, and on finding and developing technology," Larry Martin, chair of the Agri-Food Competitiveness Council, told approximately 280 participants.

Martin's focus was the principles of successful organizations, including: strategic vision and creativity; a customer focus; and, co-operation and communication from suppliers through to customers. Key to all of these ideas are people and technology.

"Successful organizations know that the two most important sources of competitive advantage are outstanding people and technology," says Martin. "These, not natural resources, are what allow places like Japan, Holland, Germany, and northern Italy to do things differently, better, faster or cheaper."

Technology and the need for training play a large role in global economic trends says Tim O'Neil, senior vice-president and deputy chief economist for the Bank of Montreal. "The growing technological and knowledge intensity of products and production processes has had an impact on virtually every sector of the economy."

Technological changes in transportation and telecommunication contributed to the significant increase in international competition. Traditional resource and manufacturing industries declined with technology, new sources of supply and consumer demand. The bottom line is a need for the proper use of new and better technology and more training so that people can work with that technology and contribute more to a knowledge-based economy.

David Fardy, senior vice-president of Cavendish Farms, spoke about the importance of training and education at all levels – from ensuring literacy to learning about the culture of new markets. Educated employees have higher self-esteem and they contribute more to the organization he says.

Of course, global competition is also creating a need for more training to understand the new markets that are opening up to the industry and how to gain access to them. The GATT/NAFTA conference is an example of this. And, judging from the

attendance at the conference and some of the comments by participants, more training of this type will be needed in the future.

Evaluation comments from participants included: "Great transfer of ideas and information"; "Good opportunity to learn more about other agriculture sectors"; and, "Good to hear Alberta is ahead of farmers and industry in other provinces."

Participants also seemed to appreciate the range of information – from the global trade perspective down to what members of the industry can do to compete successfully. One participant noted the conference "broadened the horizon". Another wrote it "created a positive attitude."

"With comments ranging from 'excellent' to 'more detail needed', it's obvious that the industry appreciates the opportunity for training and wants to make the most of it," says Barb Stroh, one of the planning co-chairs. "Participants also enjoyed having the chance to meet and talk to other people in the industry."

The nearly 300 conference participants included producers, processors, marketers and industry association representatives.

The conference was the first of several initiatives Alberta's Agriculture and Food Council is organizing to bring members of the agri-food industry together to help achieve the goals of Creating Tomorrow.

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Agri-News briefs

Antelope Creek Ranch field day July 19

If range management, drought, health of the land and wildlife are your interests, don't miss the 1994 Antelope Creek Ranch field day on July 19. Participants can see the Brooks area ranch and its range management practices. The day's activities start with registration at 9 a.m. Between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. will be spent on the range with range managers and researchers, ranchers and biologists. Participants can choose one of—livestock watering technology, range wildlife or grazing—sessions—in the afternoon. The ranch was established as an example of native mixed grass prairie and is actively managed to enhance livestock and wildlife productivity. The ranch was also designed to deal with persistent drought. For more information, contact Bob Kaufman at the Brooks Ducks Unlimited Office at (403)362-4827.

Farming is no Field of Dreams

The promise of "If you build it, he will come" in the movie **Field of Dreams** doesn't hold true in the agri-food equivalent of "If we produce it, they will buy it." So says David Fardy, senior vice-president of Cavendish Farms, a large potato processing firm that sells to the U.S., Mexico and the Pacific Rim. Speaking at a recent conference on the GATT and NAFTA, Fardy told about 280 agri-food industry participants they must get more in touch with consumers' wants, especially in export markets. Fardy's conclusions came from his company's experience in Japan. Initially New Brunswick based, Cavendish Farms tried selling the same products in the same way to **different** markets. Eventually, the company realized other cultures can be completely different from their tastes to distribution systems. Fardy encouraged participants to do their research and leave their preconceived notions at home. Larry Martin, chair of the Canadian Agri-Food Competitiveness Council, suggested sometimes farmers get so caught up in efficient production that they forget to question who they're producing for and what those customers want. "Successful organizations listen to their customers and respond to what they hear. They are market-oriented, not production-oriented," he said. Martin suggests the agri-food industry treat customers and suppliers as part of an interdependent chain. They need one another, so it's to everyone's benefit to keep the information flowing. "If we are to respond to the needs of customers with differentiated products, then the market place needs to be able to convey the product and service characteristics that are required, and it needs to reward those who provide them," says Martin, who is Director of Economic Research at the George Morris Centre. Martin stresses that the agriculture industry needs to research its customers' needs and markets, keep good communication lines open and work as a team. Then, with agri-food industry planning well grounded in reality, maybe Alberta's agriculture and food industry can make its dreams of being a global competitor come true.

Charolais association celebrates 35th anniversary July 20

One of the "oldest" of Canada's exotic imported beef cattle breeds is celebrating its 35th anniversary on July 20 in Millarville. The celebration will be held at John Ballachey's Chinook Ranch. Activities include rodeo events, special presentations and a barbecue steak dinner. The Calgary based Canadian Charolais Association was born on January 17, 1959. Charolais cattle were the first to break the stronghold held by traditional British breeds in Canada. Dubbed exotic because of their European, specifically French, origin, the Charolais breed opened the doors for other new-to-Canada breeds such as Simmental, Limousin and Maine-Anjou. The association has about 2,500 members and they register more than 25,000 cattle annually. For more information, contact the association office in Calgary at 250-9242.

FCC and AFSC create new alliance

A pilot project in Alberta combines the lending services of the federal Farm Credit Corporation (FCC) and the province's Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). The agencies will jointly operate six branch offices creating a single delivery of federal and provincial farm financial services. Over the next six months the joint lending services will be offered in Grimshaw, Stony Plain, St. Paul, Stettler, Brooks and Calgary. Except for the Calgary office, the offices will be one-stop service centres where FCC and AFSC lending programs will be available from the same location where farmers buy hail, crop and revenue insurance and consult with provincial department agriculture specialists. The two corporations will also sign an agri-business agreement to run through March 31, 1997 allowing the AFSC to source and administer agri-business loans available through FCC's expanded mandate. FCC will authorize and fund the loans and pay AFSC a fee to cover costs. The move improves service to farmers while also reducing duplication and overlap between the two levels of government. The agreement was announced by Walter Paszkowski, Alberta's agriculture minister, and his federal counterpart Ralph Goodale. For more information, contact Bob Splane, AFSC president and managing director, at (403)679-1302 in Camrose.

Beef Congress honors personal and industry achievements

Millie Boake of Rocky Mountain House was named Cattleman of the Year at the recent Alberta Beef Congress in Red Deer. Barrhead's Mike Anderson was the recipient of the congress' Forage Achievement Award. Ken Spiller, now retired from Alberta Agriculture's animal industry division, received the Beef Industry Achievement Award. For more information on the congress awards, contact Leroy Ehnes in Red Deer at 340-7406.

AGRI-NEWS

July 11, 1994

CANADIANA

Just what is a specialist?

Alberta Agriculture's move to specialization has put specialists in each of the department's 52 district offices, leaving some people wondering just what a specialist is.

"District agriculturists and home economists were very familiar to rural Albertans – both had been around for more than 50 years. Agriculture has changed a great deal over the half century, now so has one of the agri-food communities most trusted sources of information," says Glen Werner, director of strategic change.

A department restructuring and a move to specialization means all district offices now have at least one specialist. In the past district positions were filled by generalists – someone with a broad knowledge base in agriculture. This included crops, livestock, marketing and farm business. Each of the new specialists will focus on one of the specific areas such as crops.

"The department specialists today, for the most part, are all making the transition from being a generalist to a specialist," notes Werner. "You can't expect on March 31 for someone to be a generalist and April 1 to be a specialist. It will take time and training for today's specialists with knowledge in a broad area to become how we envision the specialist of the future."

For example, currently there are about 50 crop specialists across the province. With training upgrades – from in-house workshops to perhaps masters' degree work – eventually crop specialists have a broader based knowledge of all crop production plus a more specific knowledge such as in pulse or cereal crops.

"The specialist-of-the-future will have highly technical and extensive knowledge in particular discipline such as beef production. At the same time, the specialist will have a specific knowledge about one area such as cow/calf or feedlot," adds Werner.

While the former district generalists did co-operate between neighboring offices with information and courses, with specialists there will be a more structured referral to appropriate specialists in the local area as well as around the province.

For example, the Three Hills district office gets a call about pulses. While the Three Hills office does have a crops specialist, the crops specialist in Olds has more extensive knowledge about pulses. So, the Three Hills customer would get the pulse specialists number in Olds and the pulse specialist would also get the customer's number. If more than a telephone conversation

was required, the customer could be mailed or faxed information. If necessary, a meeting could be set up in the Olds or Three Hills office, or on the customer's farm.

"That's an important feature of our move to specialization," says Werner. "District offices remain an access point to information and service, but instead of just the generalist in the office, customers could be referred to one of the more than 100 specialists across the province."

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Dollar could be competitive edge for wheat in '94

While a world decrease in wheat production isn't expected to cause world prices to rise, the low Canadian dollar will boost our competitive edge in 1994 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"World wheat production is expected to decline between 10 and 12 million tonnes this year," says Matthew Machielse of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"However," he adds, "much of the expected decrease is in the former Soviet Union. As well, there are problem areas in China, Pakistan and western Australia where hot, dry conditions or winter crop damage have taken a toll."

Another factor in the world market is at least one more year of subsidized export markets. "Any gains made in the world prices will likely be offset by slightly reduced export subsidies. The net result will be a stable world price for most standard protein grades," Machielse notes.

Machielse expects Canadian export levels should return to near average levels of 21 million tonnes. "That's assuming much improved grade distribution and the related export advantage for demand of guaranteed quality," he adds.

In the longer term, two factors may prevent wheat prices from stabilizing or increasing slightly in 1995. "One is the ability of nations to pay and the second is the old question of export subsidies," he says.

The ability of importer nations to pay cash or get credit has become a major trade barrier in 1993-94. Food aid could become an even larger portion of world wheat trade given this problem. As well, price stability could still collapse if either the U.S. or the European Union (E.U.) aggressively seeks a larger market share.

"What this means to producers is that there doesn't appear to be a financial advantage in deferred pricing or holding deliverable wheat into next year," he says.

Contact: Matthew Machielse
427-5387

Looking at long-term cattle trends

The 1993 rally in cattle prices was a blip of high prices provided by mother nature in a market in the midst of the three-year downtrend says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The recent slaughter cattle price crash – while devastating in the short term – confirms a long term downward trend in U.S. fed cattle prices. Many analysts consider that downtrend started back in 1991," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"This year – 1994 – is a return to the prevailing trend downwards that was interrupted last year," he adds. "The 1993 U.S. fed cattle

price rally can be almost completely attributed to the severe winter of 1992-93 shortening beef supplies to the U.S. market."

Among the factors pushing cattle prices down are expected record levels of U.S. meat production every year. Beef faces increased retail competition in the future as Canadian poultry production picks up and U.S. pork and poultry production increases.

"The competition will be fierce with larger per capita meat supplies chasing after consumers who aren't exactly protein deficient," he notes.

There is some sun peeking through the clouds. "Back on farms and ranches, where decisions are being made that will affect beef production in 1996 and 1997, things don't look so desperate," he says.

U.S. calf prices this fall will likely still be profitable for the bulk of the industry. While the fall '94 Canadian calf prices are almost certain to be below 1993 levels, Gietz says the prices should be attractive providing the Canadian dollar stays weak.

"As it will take a much more severe drop in feeder cattle prices to turn around the current expansion in beef cow numbers, the industry should anticipate gradually increasing beef supplies until at least 1996," he says. "The bottom line is the larger per capita beef supplies will have to clear the market at lower average prices."

Gietz expects the long term downtrend in U.S. cattle prices to continue, at least until 1996. "Prices could bottom out in 1996, but there's an equally good chance the downward trend could stretch into 1997.

"The thing for Alberta cattle producers to remember is that the most likely trend for U.S. fed cattle prices is down. Plus, the dollar will continue to play a role in prices.

"If the dollar continues to fall, then the gradual U.S. price trend wouldn't be a factor. If the dollar rises significantly, that would mean double trouble for Canadian producers," he says.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Lamb market bright spot in livestock complex

Lamb markets continue to be the bright spot in livestock markets says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"U.S. prices posted steady gains in May and June and Alberta prices also increased during June," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"The Alberta prices for slaughter and feeder lambs increased, but at a lower rate than in the U.S.," he adds. Canada West Foods railgrade bids in late June were \$1.90/lb. Edmonton slaughter lambs traded between \$90 and \$94/cwt. Slaughter lambs prices were over a wider range, from \$90 to \$110/cwt. and higher.

"Interest in breeding stock is also reported as strong – on the heels of the upturn in prices," Gietz notes.

The U.S. lamb market rally was at an unusual time. "This kind of rally normally occurs in the winter months, not in late spring. Usually prices are falling," he says.

Seasonal patterns would call for slightly lower lamb prices by the fall. "But so far in 1994 neither markets nor prices have followed typical season patterns," he adds.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Breed caution, not bacteria in barbecue season

Cooking your meat thoroughly helps avoid the type of food poisoning called "hamburger disease" or "barbecue syndrome" says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"There were 152 reported cases of the *E. coli* bacteria in Alberta last year," says Linda St. Onge of the home economics branch in Edmonton. Less severe cases – estimated in the hundreds – aren't reported, she adds.

The symptoms and severity of the disease can vary among individuals. "A few people might not get sick. Some will experience symptoms about two days after eating the contaminated food, when the bacteria has had time to produce a toxin as it grows in the body," she says.

"Victims may feel like they've got a severe case of the flu – severe stomach cramps, vomiting, fever and diarrhea which is watery at first but then may become bloody," she adds.

Hamburger tops the list as a potential source of *E. coli* because the bacteria is usually found on the surface of raw meats. Hamburger is more likely to be contaminated with this bacteria than other meats because it is ground. As the raw meat is ground those surface contaminants are spread through the hamburger.

"The bacteria is killed by heat. A safe hamburger shouldn't have even a touch of pink," says St. Onge. "That means the center of a hamburger patty is brown and juices are clear.

"If you're eating out, ask to have your hamburger well done. Send it back if it isn't," she adds.

Steak and roast can be a little rare, she says, just as long as the outside is well done. St. Onge adds that poultry should be well cooked and advises never to drink unpasteurized milk.

Hamburger disease is a gastrointestinal illness caused by *E. coli* bacteria. The bacteria produces a poison, or toxin, that damages the intestine's lining and results in hemorrhagic colitis.

Most people recover from the illness within two weeks. In a small number of cases, the *E. coli* toxin results in a serious, sometimes fatal complication called Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). HUS causes kidney failure and is especially dangerous to young children, the chronically ill and the elderly.

For more information on hamburger disease (barbecue syndrome) and how to prevent it, contact St. Onge in Edmonton at 427-2412.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Keep meat clean and cold

The first step in avoiding the *E. coli* bacteria starts with choosing fresh products at the grocery store.

"Refrigerate or freeze meat as soon as possible after you buy it. Frozen meat should be thawed in the refrigerator or microwave, but not at room temperature," says Linda St. Onge, an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

Proper food handling techniques are critical when avoiding this bacteria that causes a type of food poisoning known as "hamburger disease". Raw hamburger patties – and other meats – should be prepared quickly, cooked right away or put in the refrigerator.

"Raw meats shouldn't be allowed to sit at room temperature, but just as important is once meat is cooked to serve it quickly because the environment is right for bacterial growth when food temperature goes below 60°C. Keep your hot food hot, and put leftovers in the refrigerator promptly," St. Onge advises.

Cleanliness is another important factor in preventing food poisoning. One of the most important rules is to never place cooked meat on the same plate the raw food was on.

"Never put raw meat on a plate, carry it to the barbecue, cook it and then put the cooked meat on the same plate. If there was bacteria on the raw meat, some remains on your plate and you'll recontaminate your cooked food," she explains.

When preparing meat – especially mixing hamburger – be certain hands, utensils and work surfaces are clean. This will prevent the bacteria from spreading and coming into contact with other foods. "A solution of 5mL of bleach to a litre [one teaspoon to one gallon] of water can be used to sterilize surfaces and utensils even if you are outdoors," says St. Onge. "And always use a clean cloth."

Hamburger disease is a gastrointestinal illness caused by *E. coli* bacteria. Most people recover from the illness within two weeks. In a small number of cases, the *E. coli* toxin results in a serious, sometimes fatal complication called Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). HUS causes kidney failure and is especially dangerous to young children, the chronically ill and the elderly.

For more information on safe food handling and preparation, contact St. Onge in Edmonton at 427-2412.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Producers help producers through ALeRT

One year and one day after its official formation the Alberta Foundation for Animal Care (AFAC) launched a major program designed to extend its mission of humane care and responsible use of animals.

The Animal Care ALeRT program is a producer-to-producer, non-confrontational approach to resolving issues of animal care. The program provides two basic services – an action line and a trained producer resource team.

The toll-free action line is an alternate way for producers and the public to report suspect care of farm animals. It will also provide producers with access to information they might need in setting up their own standards of care.

Calls reported on the action line are confidential. The toll-free number is 1-800-507-CARE (2273).

The resource team, who received an initial training session in late June, are volunteers. They represent a number of commodity groups who are members of the foundation. The team's purpose is to help fellow producers resolve issues of unacceptable animal care. That assistance could include an action plan based on codes of practice for the care and handling of livestock. Depending on the situation, the team might involve others such as an Alberta SPCA constable, a veterinarian or an auction market representative.

Ideally, it's hoped that Animal Care ALeRT will become involved **before** abuse or neglect occurs. "In this way, we may be able to prevent a situation from becoming a crisis and in doing that help reduce the number of cases requiring SPCA intervention," says Ray Fenton of Alberta Agriculture's health management branch. Fenton was AFAC's first chair.

The Alberta program is modeled on a similar program in Ontario. The Helpline was established by the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) in June 1992. Both provinces' programs are being monitored by farm animal care groups in the U.S.

"AFAC recognizes that the industry itself has a duty to set, monitor and encourage high standards for responsible animal care," says Randy Archibald, AFAC chair and Alberta Cattle Commission representative. "We cannot afford to ignore or defend inhumane treatment, and we need to back those words with meaningful action. Producers of Alberta have requested this service."

AFAC hopes the introduction of Animal Care ALeRT to both Alberta's agricultural community and the general public will increase public confidence in both the industry and its products. "It also demonstrates the agriculture industry's positive action and leadership in responsible animal care," says Fenton.

The foundation was established in 1993 by Alberta's major poultry and livestock groups. Founding members include: Alberta Agriculture; the Alberta Cattle Commission; the Alberta Egg Producers Board; the Alberta Hatching Egg Marketing Board; the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation; the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission; the Alberta Milk Producers

Society; the Alberta Chicken Producers; the Alberta Turkey Growers' Marketing Board; the Western Stock Growers' Association; and, Unifarm.

Current AFAC membership includes individuals, agri-businesses, societies, agricultural service boards and colleges. Membership is open to any individual who or organization that supports AFAC's mandate and goals

For more information about AFAC contact the foundation manager Susan Kitchen in Calgary at (403)777-0445.

Contact: Susan Kitchen
777-0445

Farm fuel registration renewal time

Farmers registered for the Alberta Farm Fuel Benefit will soon receive a package in the mail from Alberta Agriculture.

The department is conducting a program eligibility renewal for the fuel tax exemption and the Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance. This is done every three years. Enrolled farmers must re-apply to confirm their program eligibility.

"We've updated the brochure and revised the form to make it as easy as possible for farmers to confirm their eligibility," says Dale Dowswell, program administrator. "We've also included a self-addressed envelope to make it convenient to return the form."

Dowswell requests farmers to send the form back even if their operation has changed and they are no longer eligible. "Just write 'No longer eligible' across the form and send it back in the return envelope," he says.

The deadline for returning forms is August 31. Farmers who just registered in 1994 will automatically be renewed as their farm operation likely hasn't changed.

Unlike other years farmers will get a single reminder notice if they don't return their form by the August 31 deadline. "We're hoping to cut down on paper, postage and time this year. In fact, farmers will receive only one reminder instead of two or three," he adds.

As well, now any farmer who doesn't return the form will be automatically removed from the registrant list.

The tax exemption portion of the benefit allows farmers to purchase marked fuel without paying the nine cent per litre provincial fuel tax. The Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance further reduces the cost of marked diesel fuel by six cents per litre.

Contact: Dale Dowswell
422-9167

Durable daylilies easy garden choice

If you want to add an easy-care, versatile perennial to your garden, consider a daylily.

"Daylilies are the most adaptable, toughest perennial I know of," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "And while easy to grow, they also produce beautiful flowers and some are even fragrant."

Daylilies prefer a minimum of four hours of daily sunlight, but will also grow in the shade with less flower production. They are susceptible to few insects and diseases. They require very little beyond a well-drained soil and a little sun. "Although some spring fertilizing will boost the number of flower buds," notes Barkley.

The latin name for daylily is *Hemerocallis*, or beauty for a day. "But what daylilies lack in staying power – each flower only lasts a day – they make up for in their abundance. A single flower stem can have 15 to 25 buds," she notes.

There are also hundreds of daylily cultivars in a range of colors – yellow, orange, red, pink, mahogany and cream. Some varieties are all one color, others have throats and eyespots in accenting colors. Petals can be ruffled or strap-like forming flowers that are either open or recurved. Cultivar choice also affects the plant height and the blooming period. Plants vary from 45 to 120 cm tall. For an extended blooming period, Barkley suggests mixing and matching cultivars.

Daylilies are also easy to divide. Dig an established plant's crown and either cut it in two, or pull the fans of leaves apart. A fan is an individual piece with its own root system. Transplant by digging a hole so the crown is even with the soil level, back fill and firm the soil. Finally, water the plant in.

"You can divide and transplant in the spring or fall," says Barkley. "But fall transplants should be mulched to prevent frost heaving during the winter."

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Agri-news briefs

'94 fescue crop could be big

The 1994 creeping red fescue crop has the potential to be a big one says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Some market watchers suggest there may be as much as 120,000 acres harvested this summer," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch. With average yields – between 300 and 400 pounds per acre – a 36 to 48 million pound crop is possible. "Combined with commercial and farm carryover, red fescue supplies could be more than adequate to meet 1994-95 crop year needs," says Dooley. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Fall feeder market subdued compared to '93

Bidding on 1994 feeder calves this fall will likely be more subdued than last year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Feedlots lost money on most of their 1993 calf purchases, so will probably be more cautious this year," says Ron Gietz. Lower futures values for 1995 will also temper buyer enthusiasm. "There is some good news for Western Canadian cow calf producers even with the lower than '93 prices," he says. Information from

early forward calf sales implies a U.S. floor price for 5-600 lb. calves in Canada at around \$115/cwt. "The bulk of Western Canada's calf trade this fall could well be five to \$10/cwt. above that level," he adds. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Fed cattle prices take breather after dive

Fed cattle prices took a breather during late May and into June after their steep dive in April and May says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Alberta fed steer and heifer prices settled into a trade range in the low \$80s/cwt.," notes Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch. "However," he adds, "a number of market watchers are calling for another cattle price slide this summer." Weakening prices during the summer would follow average seasonal patterns. U.S. fed cattle prices typically bottom out in September. Gietz predicts ADS-steer prices at an average of \$81/cwt in July and increasing slightly in the following months. His forecast is based on a 72 cent Canadian dollar against its American counterpart. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.



Feedgrain market strategies not changing

The best market strategy for feedgrains didn't change through the month of June says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Sell both old crop and a portion of new crop on any price rallies," advises Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch. "It may pay feedgrain users to be patient," he adds. "The odds are still in favor of a large North American feedgrain crop this year." Gietz also notes both buyers and sellers appear willing to wait and see how 1994 production shapes up. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

American potato association meets in Calgary July 24-28

The Potato Association of America will hold its 78th annual meeting in Calgary July 24 through 28. This is the first time the internationally attended meeting has been hosted by a Canadian prairie province. The theme for the 1994 meeting is dynamics of the stored potato – a management approach. Scientific and extension information will be shared at the meeting to help sustain a competitive industry. Approximately 300 producers, processors and other industry related representatives are expected to attend the meeting. The potato industry is an important source of crop and economic diversification in Alberta. For more information, contact Alan Stuart at the Potato Growers of Alberta office in Calgary at (403)291-2430, or conference co-ordinator Isabel McPherson at (403)541-0911.

Tractors and traction clinics in the Peace

A hands-on clinics for owner/operators of tractors will be held in Grande Prairie, Fahler and Fairview in mid-July. The two-day tractors and traction clinic helps producers better understand one of their most used and expensive pieces of equipment. Topics covered include: proper ballasting and tire inflation for radial tires; diesel engine operation; and, preventative maintenance. Day one has classroom presentations and lab exercises. The second day is a morning field day. Participants will receive handouts covering all the clinic topics. Instructors are from Alberta Agriculture's Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre and Northern Montana College. The first clinic is July 13 and 14. It will be held at George Garland's farm 5.5 miles north of Guy. For more information, contact Mike Kowalski at the Alberta Agriculture district office in Fahler at 837-2211 or the High Prairie office at 523-6500. The next clinic is at Fairview College July 15 and 16. For more information, call Dale Seward at the Fairview office at 835-2241. The final clinic is in Grande Prairie July 18 and 19. For more information, call Bill MacMillan at 538-6285. You can also register for the clinics at those numbers.

4-H a tie that binds even over an ocean

A 4-H bond made over ten years ago recently reunited David Price of Wales with his Alberta host family and 4-H friends. Price was a delegate from the United Kingdom who visited Canada in October 1983 as a member of the Shell 4-H United Kingdom Exchange. "The exchange is designed to provide delegates with experience and knowledge of the various forms of agriculture in use around the world," says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H programs specialist. While visiting Alberta in 1983, Price spent much of his time with the Arthur and Betty Standing family of Hanna, and the Eileen and Merlin Wilson family of Bentley. An especially close bond was made with the Wilson family, and Price and his wife Elaine recently attended the wedding of their son Doug. "The people are wonderful," says Price. "They treated me so well last time, and things have not changed. I really made some lifetime friends. And it's great to be back here when it's green!"

AGRI-NEWS

July 18, 1994

Caring kids launch National Farm Safety Week in Alberta

"Please keep you arms away from augers – we need them for a hug" is the very special message Kevin Gorrill sent his dad.

Gorrill, 10, of Sundre was one of 1,500 rural Alberta elementary school students who took part in the **I Care Postcard** farm safety campaign. Now his postcard, and those of 11 other top winners [see attached list], will be used to promote farm safety awareness during National Farm Safety Week July 25 through 31.

As well, 270 students who produced winning entries in the fourth annual safety campaign will receive their prizes at local John Deere dealerships. John Deere Limited is the major sponsor of the fourth annual safety campaign. The other campaign sponsors are Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Women's Institutes.

This is the second consecutive year Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program has used student artwork and messages to build awareness during National Farm Safety Week. "Our children are truly our greatest resource," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, the farm safety program manager.

"Over the last nearly 20 years I've been amazed by their insight and their ability to communicate important messages to their peers, and also to the adults in their lives. The postcard campaign is just another example of how grown-ups can learn from children.

"As well, children's care and concern is a very natural way to promote a national awareness week about farm safety to everyone," he says.

Launched in late March with a giant-sized postcard created by all the grade four students at Vermilion Elementary School, the campaign invited rural students to create a postcard to send to their favorite farmer. They drew a picture for the front of the card. On the back, they wrote a message to their favorite farmer.

Carley Kastelec's message was typical of the contest entries. "Please remember you have 14 grandchildren that all love you. Please stay safe while working on the farm" were her words to her grandpa in Sanguo.

"Most post cards expressed love, thanks for the food and other things farmers produce and to take care when they're doing their work," says Jacqueline Galloway, an Alberta Agriculture farm safety consultant. "I have to admit there were a few tears while we looked through the entries," she adds.

John Deere will present company toys and campaign T-shirts to the winners. These special presentations will be at local dealers' during August.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng or Jacqueline Galloway
427-2186

Editors and News Directors: A list of winners whose work is featured follows. PMTs of their messages are available from the farm safety program office.

You will be contacted about the prize presentations in your area. For more information, contact the farm safety program office in Edmonton at 427-2186.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

The 12 featured student winners:

Ashley Neels, 6, Iron Springs, 738-4301
 Ayo Abiola, 9, Vermilion, 853-6374
 Jason Becker, 11, Grimshaw, 332-2028
 Ryan Boychuk, 8, Thorhild, 398-2508
 Cody Durand, 9, Spruce Grove, 962-9389
 Kevin Gorrill, 10, Sundre, 556-2954
 Aaron Hale, 9, Worsley, 685-3953
 Shaun Kaiser, 7, Fairview, 835-4607
 Carley Kastelic, 11, Hanna, 854-4680
 Kristin Olsen, 7, Irma, 754-2254
 Kent Sereda, 10, Rolling Hills, 964-3910
 Rick Stauffer, 7, Clive, 784-2165

UFA builds tomorrow's leaders today

Any parent or teacher will testify how tough it is to get a safety message across to teenagers, but UFA is going to meet this challenge head-on through an innovative teen farm safety promotion.

The Way WE See It campaign will start at the beginning of the 1994-95 school year. Rural high school students across the province will be invited to shoot a 30-second television commercial on farm machinery safety.

"We feel the key to communicating a safety message to teens is to ask them to deliver it themselves," says Orval Sorken, UFA president. "To be effective, the message has to be from their peers and in their language."

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development are co-sponsors of the campaign. CBC will professionally reproduce the winning entry with participation from the student or students who developed the commercial. That commercial will be aired on CBC during spring 1995 Molson Hockey Night in Canada telecasts.

"We're proud to be a part of a campaign that will be beneficial to everyone," says Brian Grey, CBC network sales manager in Edmonton. "Targetting high school students is something CBC has always been interested in doing and we're excited about our participation in reaching a rural audience. This campaign is definitely one of the better ideas we've come across."

Every student who enters the contest will receive a **The Way WE See It** T-shirt. The top three entrants will receive scholarships towards their post-secondary education. First place is a \$2,500 scholarship, second \$1,500 and third \$1,000. Even the school wins. The school where the winning entry came from will receive a video camera.

"This program will capture the attention of Alberta's rural youth to raise their awareness of farm safety and improve their knowledge

of operating farm equipment," predicts Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program.

"In our research, we've found that rural farm youth between the ages of 12 and 19 are the most inexperienced farm machinery operators, and by extension are more likely to have an accident," he adds.

The provincial farm safety program has run a number of programs geared to elementary school students. "These student-to-student and student-to-parent campaigns have been effective awareness and prevention campaigns," says Kyeremanteng.

While UFA sponsors a variety of agricultural education programs, this is its first safety promotion venture. However, Sorken and the company are convinced the teen campaign is a worthwhile project.

"We are proud to be involved in this promotion," says Sorken.

"We see it as an investment in the youth of today, who are the community leaders of tomorrow."

Contact: Orval Sorken Brian Grey Solomon Kyeremanteng
 258-4508 468-2352 427-2186

Biotech first project of Western Ag Ed Council

With a \$46,000 commitment from the National Institute of Biotechnology the fledgling Western Canadian Agricultural Education Council has taken off on its first flight.

That flight is an interprovincial agrifood biotechnology awareness project. The project will include a 15-minute video for secondary schools, a teacher guide, a public display including a video and the distribution of biotech resources.

Founded at the end of January, the council brings together Agriculture in the Classroom (AIRC) programs in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba as well as their many sponsors and supporters.

"An interprovincial council has given us both the scope and ability to take on broader and bigger projects," says Betty Gabert, agriculture awareness specialist with Alberta Agriculture and co-ordinator of Alberta's AIRC program.

"While one of the advantages of this link is sharing materials between provinces efficiently and effectively, the council believes we can go beyond the borders of our provinces as well as the boundaries of the classroom.

"One audience is certainly grade seven through 12 students and their teachers, but we also want to reach the general public with this biotechnology project and its message," she adds.

The message is manifold – to increase awareness of scientific and research technology in the agrifood industry, to demonstrate biotechnology's role in our lives and everyday food options, and to present a fair picture of agrifood research and technology.

The council's first project is a good example of what it hopes to continue to do through joint projects with industry, commodity groups and other organizations. "We've already seen some agricultural awareness partners line-up to help with this first project," notes Gabert. [See related story.]

Each province is represented by a technical advisor. John Taylor is Manitoba Agriculture's livestock director. Ralph Christian is executive director of both Alberta Agriculture's research division and the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute. They are two of the advisors. The third is Murray McLaughlin of Ag-West Biotech in Saskatoon.

"From my perspective this project is important in creating a basic knowledge about biotechnology and how it can benefit the general public," says McLaughlin who has been with Ag-West for the last five years and involved in agricultural research for the past 25 years.

"People, generally, have some discomfort with a new technology," he adds. "This project is one avenue toward public understanding of biotechnology, of how safe it is and how it can benefit them."

Biotechnology includes any technique that uses living organisms to make or modify products, to improve plants or animals or to develop micro-organisms for specific uses. Among biotechnology's tools and techniques are protein engineering, cell fusion, recombination DNA and increasingly efficient fermenters.

Although Alberta and Manitoba provincial education departments have already endorsed the project, a co-operative advisory committee from the three AITC programs will review the project's materials to make sure they are appropriate for the curriculum. They will also distribute the final package.

At the same time, the project has had initial input from 35 teachers and Alberta Education. One of the early evaluations was a student-teacher tour of Agriculture Canada's Lethbridge research station. A small group of those teachers will provide ongoing feedback as the project progresses.

As well, the 1995 Summer Agricultural Education Institute will focus on biotechnology. The institute offers teachers and education students an opportunity to delve into the agrifood industry. The full-credit, fourth year course is a joint project of Alberta Agriculture, the University of Lethbridge and the college host. The 1994 institute was held in Fairview last week. The 1995 institute will be held in Lethbridge.

Contact: **Betty Gabert** **Dr. Murray McLaughlin**
427-2402 (306)975-1939

Alberta Pool joins biotech video project team

Alberta Pool has anted up a 10 per cent stake in the Western Canadian Agricultural Education Council's first major project.

The Pool has committed \$8,000 dollars to a biotechnology video project with an \$80,000 budget. Over half of the funding – some \$46,000 – was provided by the National Institute of Biotechnology. [See related story this issue.]

"It's not surprising to me that the Pool would get involved," says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture agricultural awareness specialist and co-ordinator of Alberta's Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) program.

The Pool already is the major sponsor of the Agricultural Ambassador program, and has been since the program's inception in 1991. The program's goal is to have an agricultural ambassador in every Alberta school.

"We feel the biotechnology project is a very good indication of the support for Alberta's AITC program, as well as the support for the larger scope projects the council was founded to do," says Gabert.

Besides its ongoing support of agricultural education and awareness, the Pool also has a strong commitment to developing improved crop varieties. Part of Alberta Pool's effort to find new markets for Canadian grain involves extensive research and development. Since 1976, the farmer-owned co-operative has brought many new varieties to the marketplace. Biotechnology now plays a critical role in helping the Pool's researchers.

"The science and technology that goes into our in-house research program allows us to develop new, higher yielding varieties that are specifically suited to farming environments both at home and abroad," explains Alex Graham, Alberta Pool president.

"Supporting the biotechnology video project is supporting the Pool's own research program, since the project's aim is to foster a better understanding of a new technology," Graham adds. "Everyone – not just the agrifood industry – needs to know how important biotechnology can be to the industry's future."

"Whether it's developing a new rye variety for the Korean market or a high protein malt barley variety that can be grown on Alberta farms, a concerted effort to understand and apply the latest trends in biotechnology and crop research are essential. The application of biotechnology helps us stay ahead of the competition and gives us an edge in both domestic and international markets."

Contact: **Betty Gabert** **Trish Jordan**
427-2402 260-4647

Customer design in new-look district offices

Timeliness, localized, accessible and unbiased service are just four of the major benefits Alberta Agriculture district offices offer their customers.

"Those aren't new qualities of our services, rather a reconfirmed and focused commitment to our clients," says Alan Hall, central region director.

"It's a matter of not resting on our laurels, but continuing to reach for excellence in how we provide information and services to the people we deal with," he adds.

Hall has a reassurance for customers. The basic services will still be there – farm meetings, problem-solving, providing publications

Cont'd on page 4

and applied research demonstrations. "We're aiming to improve our already top-quality services," he says.

"The other element in the recent restructuring and move to specialization is that asking our clients what we could do better and how we could change to improve our service **came before** changes dictated by budget," says Hall.

About two and a half years ago the department's regional field services – now known as regional advisory services – began setting up focus groups represented by farmers and other clients who were frequent users and even those who didn't use the department's services.

"What we got were the characteristics of our service that our customers valued plus some missing ingredients," explains Hall.

One of the valued elements was a feeling that farmers could come to their local office for unbiased information and problem-solving. For example, farm partners read about a new product or technique in a magazine. They want to bounce the concept by a neutral, but interested sounding board. So, they go see the district specialist.

Quality and timely information has always been a commitment by the department to its customers notes Hall. "And, they want that quality and timeliness to continue in up-to-date, accurate and thorough information whether they are farmers, agricultural organizations or agribusinesses."

Focus groups also felt there needed to be more adaption of information for use by and in the local area. "I believe the move to specialization is key to achieving this result," says Hall.

"Specialists have been placed in certain areas because that is the dominant type of agriculture there.

"This should allow the particular specialist to be more specific in their own focus. Plus, there's always the neighboring specialist close at hand to help out."

Getting an integrated, or more comprehensive, approach to problems was another need outlined by the focus groups. This means that a field crop problem would be looked at from tillage, fertilizer, engineering, pest and other perspectives.

"With the new structure we can do this and still fulfil another need – ready access to those specialists," notes Hall. "District and regional boundaries don't apply, except for our internal administration. Specialists will serve much more than their home office."

More than ever before district offices are the first-stop for connecting a customer with all the department has to offer, plus other sources of information such as agribusinesses, farm groups, researchers and colleges.

There are 52 district offices across the province. A vast majority of farmers are within a half-hour's drive of those offices.

"We're pleased we could achieve this kind of access, that 95 per cent of our farmers are a half-hour or closer to our offices. It's also something that came out of the focus groups – our clients were willing to travel, but the half-hour travelling time was key.

"Another accessibility benefit is that by coming to one of our district offices the customer isn't just talking to the front-line –

they can be connected to a network that goes beyond the department," he says.

In the future as more farmers and agribusinesses add computers, modems and fax machines to their operations, some of their information could be sent, sought or retrieved electronically. This is already happening on a national bulletin board system – FBMInet – as well as with requests and answers faxed between the department and clients.

"We also have some goals for our service that we see as a natural extension of the changes we're making now. One is that we become more of a partner in problem solving with our customers, rather than just a consultant. We'll be part of a team looking at a problem or a business opportunity," he says.

Finally, Hall says, the extension services of yesterday, today and tomorrow are about everyone realizing that learning doesn't stop at school room doors and that technology is always changing. "Whether it's our staff or our clients, we all must remember learning is a life-long process, something we all need to do no matter our job."

Contact: Alan Hall
340-7611

Agroforestry committee supports industry

An agroforestry committee has been formed to assist Alberta farmers and private land owners interested in managing timber harvesting says an Alberta Agriculture engineer.

"The timber found on Alberta land, which formerly had little value, now has good value," says Douwe Vanderwel, soil and water conservation engineer and agroforestry committee member.

"Technology has evolved that has made pulping of Alberta's aspen possible. Also, the shortage of available wood in British Columbia now has that province's mills seeking logs – primarily spruce – harvested from private lands in Alberta. This pressure on farmers and land owners helped to initiate the Alberta intergovernmental/interprovincial steering committee on agroforestry," he says.

"We hope to provide leadership throughout the province on the issue," adds Vanderwel. The committee's purpose is to ensure a collaboration between government departments in this new and emerging Alberta agroforestry industry."

The committee includes representatives from the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Association (PFRA), Natural Resources Canada (Canadian Forest Service), Alberta Environmental Protection (Land and Forest Services), and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

"The various help from each department will allow agriculture to tap into the expertise at forestry, and for forestry to use our contacts and experience within the agriculture industry. Our goal

is to promote a viable and sustainable farm woodlot industry," he explains.

The committee is currently establishing terms of reference, modeled after Manitoba and Saskatchewan where active committees are currently co-ordinating developments in agroforestry.

Contact: Douwe Vanderwel
422-4385

Model evaluates management effects on soil loss

A Water Erosion Prediction Project (WEPP) model can now determine the impact of water erosion on soil and water quality says an Alberta Agriculture engineer.

"There is a lack of data and understanding of the effects of management practices used to control soil erosion in Alberta," says Andy Jedrych. "The recent development in soil erosion models such as WEPP from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), now allows us to simulate the effects of these management factors on erosion processes.

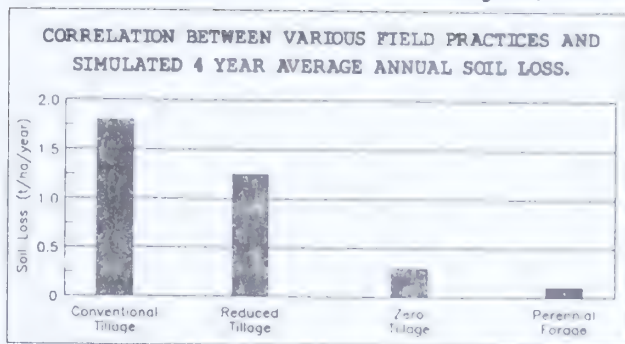
The WEPP model is currently being tested by Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch, the University of Alberta, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

"The model represents the newest technology in soil erosion modelling, by considering soil, slope and management variability within a field," says Jedrych. "It's process-based. That means each component of the erosion process is considered separately. As well, it deals with sediment deposition, gully erosion and sediment yield," he explains.

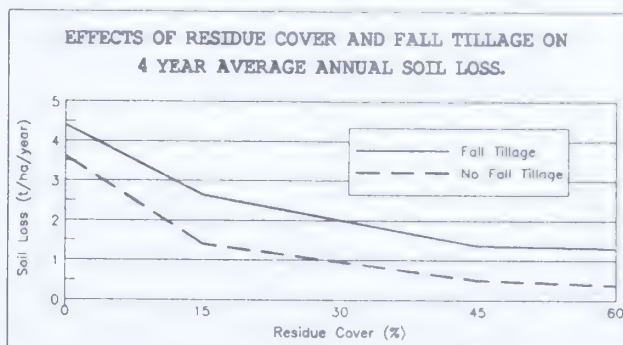
In order to demonstrate the potential of the WEPP model, simulations were conducted on a clay loam soil at a five per cent slope using one of the WEPP's prototypes. Inputs were for a typical farm practice in the Peace River region that includes a fallow-canola-wheat-oats rotation and perennial forage.

"Residue cover and tillage practices have great impact on erosion, yet it is not clear how much of each were required to control erosion," says Jedrych. "The WEPP simulations showed the importance of increased residue cover and decreased tillage to control soil erosion. It provided an inexpensive and fast method of evaluating acceptable levels of residue cover and tillage practices for controlling soil erosion. It could also be used to identify potential sediment delivery to waterways."

Contact: Andy Jedrych
422-6530



The simulated average annual soil loss from conventional tillage field was 1.82 t/ha. This was higher than the soil loss from the reduced tillage by 46%, the zero tillage by 600%, and the perennial forage by 2022%.



Increased levels of residue cover left after harvest resulted in reduced soil loss. The 45% residue cover reduced soil loss by 315% on clay loam. Deep fall cultivation which buried residue increased soil loss on average by 98%.

June was cool and wet

June was cool and wet in Alberta leaving good soil moisture conditions and difficult haying conditions in its wake.

"This was the second consecutive wet, cool month after March and April's warm, dry weather," says Peter Dzikowski, Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"Now, moisture conditions are generally good for Alberta crops but warmth is the key to their development. Dry days will also be necessary for many farmers to finish haying," he adds.

June precipitation was nine per cent above the normal Alberta average while the average temperature was 0.4°C below normal. These averages are based on data recorded at 59 Environment Canada climate stations across the province.

The climate stations averaged 80 mm of precipitation, 6.8 mm above the 1961 to 1990 average. Most of Alberta received above normal precipitation except for the far north and parts of southern Alberta.

Regionally, the Peace reported between 60 and 120 mm. Central regions reported between 70 and 180 mm of precipitation, varying from 80 per cent to 200 per cent of normal. The southern

region reported between 30 and 100 mm, about 40 per cent to 150 per cent of normal June average.

The most precipitation during June was 178.1 mm at Rocky Mountain House. That was about 193 per cent of its long-term average.

The average monthly temperature for June was 14.1°C. The long-term average temperature for the same 59 stations in June is 14.5°C.

"While the Peace region reported temperatures 0.5 to 1.5 degrees above normal, most other Alberta locations reported temperatures between normal and two degrees below normal," notes Dzikowski.

Crowsnest Pass reported the coldest monthly average, 11.3°C. Bow Island reported a 16.8°C average, the warmest monthly average temperature in the province, but it was still 0.8° below normal.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Agri-News briefs

Alberta gripped by berry frenzy

Short and sweet is one description of the strawberry season in Alberta. However, the Alberta Market Gardeners Association (AMGA) offers you an easy way to find strawberry growers in your area. Its free brochure is called Come to Our Farm. The brochures are at public libraries, farmers' markets and district Alberta Agriculture offices. You can also call the association's toll-free line at 1-800-661-AMGA (2642) and have a brochure mailed directly to you. The hotline will also tell you what's in season as the summer progresses. The brochures are a guide to more than strawberries. They also list all market gardeners plus the vegetables and fruits they grow. For more information, contact Rosemary Giberson, AMGA promotions manager, at 934-5400.

market demand and improve beef consumption," adds Sears. "The need for the ACC to protect producers' interest in the legislative and policy arena is as great as ever." Producers can contact a local delegate or the commission office in Calgary at 275-4400 for more information or nomination forms.

Ag policy consultation results presented

Alberta farmers were heard at a recent federal-provincial agriculture minister's meeting in Winnipeg. Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture's minister, presented "Removing restraints to and offsetting effects of low farm income". The report is based on a series of consultations held across the province during June. Alberta farmers say they want government to remove restraints to earning income in the market more than they want government to work on improving safety nets. In particular, the report outlines two areas farmers want government to concentrate on: grain marketing, handling and transportation; and, trade barriers. Over 50 per cent of farmers at the consultation meetings said they want some form of farm income support. Most say income support should apply to the whole farm rather than just some commodities. "I am very pleased that farmers have provided the Alberta government with a strong base on which to build future federal-provincial agricultural policy," says Paszkowski. "Their input is essential at a time when re-inventing government is now beginning to happen at the federal-provincial level. I will be using the report as a guide to negotiations with the federal government and the provinces. I want to thank all those who participated in the June consultations across the province." The report is available from Alberta Agriculture's policy secretariat by writing 301, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, calling (403)427-2417 or faxing (403)427-3005.

Alberta Cattle Commission now accepting nominations

Nominations are now open for 45 Alberta Cattle Commission delegates. The nomination deadline is August 24. Elections are held in November. Candidates must submit a resume with the nomination form. Resume summaries are printed in the commission's annual report so producers can read about the candidates in their area. Zone directors are elected for two-year terms. There are 10 delegates in each of nine zones. A board of directors is elected from the delegate body. Current chair Larry Sears says this is an exciting time to get involved in the commission. "We are beginning our post-plebiscite planning to better meet producers' needs and expectations," he says. The winter plebiscite confirmed a mandatory check-off on cattle sales used to fund the association. "As well, we are on the verge of exciting changes that will reposition the beef industry to meet

Families saluted at K-Days

Edmonton Northlands will salute 42 Alberta families next week (July 25) with special Farm Family Awards. For the first time in the award program's 26-year history urban families will join their rural counterparts as awardees. The six urban families were selected by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues in co-operation with Northlands. The goal is promoting a better understanding between rural and urban families during 1994's International Year of the Family. For a list of the award winners or for more information, contact Kenn Bur at (403)471-7210.

International master gardener conference

The University of Saskatchewan is hosting an international master gardener conference July 23 through 26 in Saskatoon. Activities will be at the Delta Bessborough and Sheraton Cavalier hotels. For more information, contact Bruce Hobbin at the university's extension division at (306)966-5551 or fax (306)966-5567.

Calgarian new DU president

Calgary businessman Bill Turnbull is the new president of Ducks Unlimited Canada. A long-time advocate of wildlife conservation, he has been a member of the DU board of directors since 1981. One of his first announcements was that DU surpassed its national habitat goal for 1993-94. In total 173,000 acres were secured and nearly 160,000 acres enhanced. Agricultural programs have been the focus of DU efforts over the last five years. The details are in the organization's 1994 annual report. For more information or a copy of the annual report, contact Bob Kindrachuk or Shel Zolkewich at (204)467-3000.

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AGRI-NEWS

July 25, 1994

CANADIAN

AUG 11 1994

Change to lifetime brands reduces costs

Beginning next year brand owners in Alberta can purchase their brands for life rather than having to renew them every four years.

Starting January 1, 1995 cattle and horse brand owners who renew their brands will be able to purchase their lifetime brands for \$220. The same applies to brands up for renewal at the beginning of 1996, 1997 and 1998.

"Moving to lifetime brands is good news for both brand owners and the province," says Cliff Wulff, director of Alberta Agriculture's marketing services division. "It's a change that provides benefits for everyone involved."

Every year the provincial brand office in Stettler receives numerous calls from cattle and horse owners who forgot to renew their brands. As a result, they lost the rights to their brands and sometimes these brands were re-issued to other producers.

"This was a source of real aggravation, particularly for owners of arbitrary brands whose brands couldn't be renewed if they lapsed and were re-assigned. By purchasing lifetime brands, brand owners will be able to eliminate such problems," Wulff says. "As well, brand owners will be able to pass brand ownership to other family members and keep the brand in the family."

Another benefit of lifetime brands is a significant reduction in the provincial brand inspection program's operating costs.

"Administration costs associated with renewing 55,000 brands every four years add up quickly," says Wulff. "Funds saved in this cost-reduction measure, along with the revenue from the purchase of brands, will be used for brand inspection program operating costs as well as industry projects."

Another amendment releases many brands not previously available including single character brands such as symbols.

Both changes are based on a recent government-industry sponsored review of brand registration policy. A May 1994 study examined the market value of brands in North America and how much Alberta brand holders would be willing to pay for a one-time, lifetime brand fee. Some 400 Alberta brand holders were asked their opinion.

The study was reviewed by the Livestock Industry Advisory Committee and was approved by a majority of members. The committee has representatives from the Alberta Auction Markets

Association, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Western Stock Growers Association, the Alberta Cattle Feeders Association and the Feeders Association of Alberta.

All brand holders and members of the agriculture industry will receive detailed guidelines regarding the changes from the provincial brand inspection office later this summer.

Contact: Cliff Wulff
427-4241

Cliff Munroe
427-4241

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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Publishing Branch
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MacEwan enviro centre opens to Fox tunes

Later this week (July 28) the Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre will be officially opened with help from 50 conservation campers, a message from its namesake and music by former 4-Her George Fox.

Sod was broken for the environmental centre four years ago as a finale to the 25th annual Alberta 4-H conservation camp.

MacEwan, long-time conservationist and former lieutenant-governor, did the sod breaking himself with a horse and plow. A taped message from the 91-year-old MacEwan will be played during the opening ceremonies.

Opening ceremonies will begin at 2 p.m. on Thursday July 28 at the new Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre. It is part of the provincial 4-H centre at Battle Lake, 37 km west of Wetaskiwin.

This year's 50 4-H conservation campers will lead O Canada and the 4-H pledge at the beginning of the ceremonies. "Our 4-H campers are just one of the groups who will use this facility," says Henry Wiegman, provincial 4-H agriculture specialist and camp co-ordinator.

Fox's music recently served as a fundraiser for the Environmental Centre. Over 1,700 of his *Mustang Heart* recordings were sold across the province between early January and mid-May. The 4-H Foundation of Alberta and the local 4-H club split \$4 from each sale. The foundation's share was \$3,500.

Also on hand for the ceremonies will be representatives of other sponsoring and funding organizations. Among them are Alberta Power and TransAlta Utilities. Both companies are original and continuing sponsors of the annual 4-H conservation camp.

The facility is an interpretative centre. It features interactive learning stations. Last year an Environmental Appreciation Program was started for school groups.

The centre building also serves as the hub of the environmental trail system. The trails were developed along with nine environmental appreciation manuals. Trail systems cover a diverse cross-section of ecosystems and a wide variety of plant and animal life. This includes a fern glade, the largest natural surviving one of its kind in North America.

"Both the Alberta 4-H Centre and the MacEwan centre are used by more than 4-Hers," notes Wiegman. "Schools are already taking advantage of the environmental appreciation program. It's a community and a provincial resource that's open to everyone."

During the official opening, the 1994 Grant MacEwan Conservation Award will be presented to Wendy Williams of Gibbons. **[See related story this issue.]** The award recognizes former conservation campers for spreading the conservation message after attending the camp.

MacEwan has a long association with both conservation and 4-H. He sold the 58-hectare site on Battle Lake to the province's 4-H foundation in 1977. His stipulation was that 4-H would protect the environmentally sensitive area.

For more information, contact Wiegman in Edmonton at 427-2541 or the centre site managers at 682-2153.

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

Learning conservation ethics at camp

Conservation is more than just a concept to the 4-Hers who attend the annual provincial conservation camp.

"The campers do spend time in a classroom setting, but the real learning is outside, with hands-on observation and field trips," says Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture's 4-H agriculture specialist.

The 29th annual camp runs July 24 to 29. Each of the 50 campers choose one conservation area to study in-depth. They also learn something about the other four areas. The five choices are water, soil, range, forestry, and fish and wildlife.

Camps are held at the provincial 4-H centre at Battle Lake. The facility, 37 km west of Wetaskiwin, includes an extensive trail system with a wide variety of plants and animals, and a diverse cross-section of ecosystems including the lake.

"As well, there's the Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre. The centre includes interactive learning stations and is also the hub of the trail system," notes Wiegman.

"The official opening of the centre will happen during the conservation camp, so this year's campers will be getting a special treat," he adds. **[See related story this issue.]**

Group activities are led by specialists from the province's special municipal areas, Alberta Environmental Protection, Alberta Agriculture and camp sponsors Alberta Power and TransAlta Utilities.

One of the camp's popular activities is a mock development hearing. "Campers get to see the many sides of environmental issues as they role play through the hearing," says Wiegman.

Conservation campers are encouraged to share what they've learned in their own communities. Since 1975 the camper who best spreads the conservation message after attending the camp receives the Grant MacEwan Conservation Award. **[See related story this issue.]**

MacEwan, the award's namesake, is a former Alberta Lieutenant-Governor and long-time conservation champion. The centre's newest facility is named for him. The Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre will be officially opened on July 28. MacEwan sold the Battle Lake site to the 4-H Foundation of Alberta with the condition 4-H protect the environmentally sensitive area.

For more information on the provincial 4-H conservation camp, the Grant MacEwan Conservation Award or the Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre, contact the Alberta Agriculture home economics and 4-H branch at 427-2541.

Contact: Henry Wiegman 427-2541

Recycled thinking nets youth conservation award

Encouraging her home town of Gibbons to recycle its thinking and bring reusable paper to a depot she helped set up are two of the reasons Wendy Williams is the 1994 Grant MacEwan Conservation Award recipient.

The award has been presented since 1975 to an Alberta 4-H conservation camper who best spreads the conservation message after attending the provincial conservation camp. **[See related story on the 1994 camp in this issue.]**

Williams, 18, will receive the award on July 28 during the 1994 camp during the official opening of the Grant MacEwan Environmental Centre at Battle Lake. **[See related story on the opening in this issue.]**

"Conservation camp encourages all the campers to go home and do something for the environment in their community," says Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H agriculture specialist. "Wendy took actions on a lot of levels – her 4-H club, her school and her home town."

Williams chose forestry – from five conservation areas – for detailed study when she attended the provincial 4-H conservation camp in 1992. She says her choice made her realize the uniqueness of the forest and how recycling can make a difference.

Among her efforts was starting a recycling depot in Gibbons. She also designed a conservation mascot for the town. This summer she's working at the depot. Her job includes promoting the facility and helping depot users.

At school she was a member of the Sturgeon Composite High School climate committee. The committee promoted environmental concerns around the school.

Through 4-H, Williams attended regional, district and local functions related to conservation. This ranged from teaching a craft course to visiting the 1993 conservation camp as the Premier's Award winner. She's also encouraged fellow 4-Hers to attend the annual conservation camp.

Williams describes her conservation camp experience as the "best week of the whole summer" and also made her more conscious of things such as product packaging, picking up garbage even if it's not hers and developing a green thumb. She also used city buses for transportation while at her first year of university in Edmonton.

The Grant MacEwan Conservation award comes with a \$300 cheque and a sculptured plaque. The award is named in honor of Alberta's former Lieutenant-Governor and long-time conservationist. The annual camp and award are sponsored by Alberta Power and TransAlta Utilities and administered by Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch.

Contact: Henry Wiegman Wendy Williams
427-2541 942-2143

Serving on the front line

As Alberta Agriculture district offices settle into changes from restructuring and a move to specialization, the key component in making the new system work are the people on its front line.

They are the support staff, the first people customers will see or talk to at a district office. Their job is assessing the customer's need and then putting them in touch with the best person to help solve their problem or answer their question. That person could be in the local office or another Alberta Agriculture district office. It could even be someone from outside the department.

Support staff do more than make a referral. They give customers phone numbers, but go a step beyond to contact the specialist themselves. "The onus is on us to provide the service," says Alan Hall, central regional director. "We're responsible to make the connection, not the customer."

This means support staff's role in district offices has not only changed, but grown. Shauna Gagne says support staff now spend much more time connecting customers to a specialist. This is especially true in her case as the Sangudo district office only has one assigned specialist. So, Gagne has to ask customers more in-depth questions.

"It means we have to ask more questions so we can direct customers to the most appropriate specialist," agrees Diane Luke of the Drumheller office.

That's meant some adjustment for the customers. "They were used to coming in and talking to whoever was here right away," notes Gagne. "And, it's not working quite the same way now."

Luke says the adjustment has been stressful on both staff and customers as they adjust to the new way of doing business. For staff it's been getting a handle on who to make referrals to and where the specialist or source is at, whether inside or outside the department.

Dorothy Stewart, an Alberta Agriculture veteran of more than 20 years, says she's excited by the new approach. "I can refer my customers to any one of the 52 district agriculture offices in the province and they can be helped by someone who is an expert," says the Three Hills based Stewart.

For district office customers there's been some confusion about where they should go for information and a potentially longer wait for information. The situation of where to go has improved and customers are adapting to any wait says Luke, a former district home economist whose been with the department for 21 years. In fact, very little additional time is now needed to put the customer and right specialist together.

"We're, both staff and customers, getting used to the new system. Certainly the service is getting better all the time. And, customers are beginning to recognize they can actually access specialized information from any of the offices," says Luke.

Gagne, also a former district home economist, echoes her colleagues about customers learning and being patient with the new referral system. "Most are fairly understanding, but it

depends on how fast they want the information. If the beef specialist in our office can't help them, most are willing to wait and let me go through the referral system and find the right specialist for their need. I think they'll adapt to the system because they'll find they're getting better information," Gagne adds.

Because the referral system is new, support staff are still finding the best way to keep track of where specialists are, and not just which office has what kind of specialist.

One region sends out weekly itineraries to each office. This lists where or what office specialists will be in during the week. Another region uses a computer calendar system to track specialists.

Support staff are also keeping touch with customers to see how they feel about the new referral system. For example, Stewart keeps track of each referral, then mails an evaluation two weeks later. Customers are asked if they were satisfied with the information they got and by being referred to a specialist not in their local district office.

"Response has been excellent and for the most part very positive," says Stewart. Like her counterparts, Stewart gives credit to the quality of the information. "Customers are happy to get answers from someone who is an expert in the particular subject."

Contact: Shauna Gagne 785-2266 Diane Luke 823-1675 Dorothy Stewart 443-8525

Guide to backyard pests available

An up-dated, new look **Backyard Pest Management in Alberta** booklet is the newest publication for sale from Alberta Agriculture.

"The booklet has many features," says Mike Dolinski, one of the booklet's contributing experts and an entomologist with Alberta Agriculture's soil and crop management branch.

"But, its strength lies in its practical look at over 150 common pests you might find in your garden or around your yard," he adds.

The 83-page booklet can help its users identify insects, weeds, diseases and vertebrate pests (such as gophers and birds). Each section includes an introduction to each type of pest with general information. For example, the weed section starts with descriptions of annual, biennial and perennial weeds.

Insect, weed and vertebrate pest descriptions include a drawing to make identification easier. Disease damage is described in detail. Each individual pest entry also tells about its life history and details its management and control. Controls include both chemical and non-chemical methods.

"This allows you to make the choice about how you want to control your pest problem. You can read about cultural, biological and chemical controls before you make your decision," notes Dolinski.

The booklet sells for \$5 plus GST at Alberta Agriculture district offices and the department headquarters Publications Office in Edmonton. [See address below.]

Backyard Pest Management in Alberta can also be ordered by mail from the publications office. Add \$2 per order for shipping and handling. For orders from outside Canada add another \$3. Cheques and money orders should be made payable to the Provincial Treasurer. The complete address for the Publications Office is 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Mike Dolinski
427-7098

Renewable energy field day changes format, focus

The annual Alberta Renewable Energy Test Site (ARETS) field day has changed its format and focus for 1994.

"Previously the field day included site equipment and demonstrations. This year we've put together an information day and field tours," says John Chang of Alberta Agriculture's engineering branch.

"This change is because we've shifted the spotlight from solar and wind power technologies to the livestock water supply and quality issues these technologies support. Our theme is the best description – renewable energy and pasture water systems that pay," he adds.

Solar and wind-powered water pumping and dugout aeration systems are tested and demonstrated at ARETS.

The information day with field tours is August 17. Information sessions are in the morning at Pincher Creek's Heritage Inn. Registration starts at 8:30 with presentations beginning at 9 a.m. Two tours follow lunch. One is to the solar-powered pumping installations at the Oldman River Dam. The second is to the Alberta Renewable Energy Test Site.

Morning topics include: cattle, water and fish; water from dugouts and cattle performance; alternative pasture water systems; improving dugout water through aeration; and, using solar and wind power on the farm.

"Our speakers include Alberta Agriculture specialists and researchers, Agriculture Canada researchers, a site project engineer and the Canadian Cattlemen's Association environmental co-ordinator," notes Chang. Chang, an energy engineer, is a speaker himself.

At the test site, manufacturers and suppliers will describe their systems. Site staff will talk about test systems and how they have worked.

Participants also have the option of an extra tour the evening before the field day. A guided tour of electric wind farms in the Pincher Creek area is planned. "The field day is an excellent opportunity to meet with researchers who are involved in livestock water supply and quality," notes Chang.

Registration is required by August 10. Registration fees of \$20 per person are payable at the door.

For more information or to register, call any of the following Alberta Agriculture district offices: Barrhead at 674-8252; Red Deer at 340-5342; Airdrie at 948-8537; or, Lethbridge at 381-5112. You can also call the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

ARETS evaluates and demonstrates renewable energy technologies (solar and wind systems) for agricultural applications. ARETS is funded by the Department of Natural Resources Canada, Alberta Energy and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

Contact: John Chang
427-2181

Alberta responds to producer payment panel report

The federal government must act now to change the method of payment of the Crow Benefit says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister.

"Western Canada cannot afford to sit back and let the Benefit be confiscated or lost due to inaction," he adds in reaction to recent statements by federal officials that the federal government intends to cut the Crow Benefit. Alberta's agriculture minister was also responding to a recently released report by the Producer Payment Panel. The report calls for the Crow Benefit to be used to fund part of the federal government's commitment to national farm safety-net programs.

"There is no doubt that the method of paying the benefit must be changed. Our obligations on export subsidies under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) require the change. The GATT clock will begin to tick in July 1995 at the latest," says Paszkowski. "The federal government has no choice but to meet our responsibilities under the GATT agreement.

"The Crow Benefit must remain in the west to allow farmers to adjust to new rules. I believe the full Crow Benefit, the entire annual payment of \$720 million, is needed to help western farmers adjust to new conditions that will emerge as the benefit is paid to farmers.

"If we are to act quickly, and in a manner that will best meet the varying needs of farmers in Western Canada, the best option is to divide up the \$720 million benefit between the western provinces.

"We need strong action and leadership from the federal government to improve system efficiency. They are moving in the right direction," he adds.

Paszkowski released an eight-point action plan with suggestions for dealing with Western Canadian concerns about the future of the Crow Benefit and grain farmers, as well as for the future of the grain handling and rail transportation system. **[An outline follows.]**

"I am hopeful that British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba will support the action plan and offer strong support to the benefit remaining in Western Canada and for the payment to farmers to be apportioned on a provincial basis," says Paszkowski.

Contact: Dwight Dibben C. D. Radke
(403)427-2137 (403)427-2145

Method of Payment Action Plan

Subject: Method of Payment of the Crow Benefit, and Grain System Efficiency

Background: The final report of the Producer Payment Panel, headed by Dr. Ed Tychniewicz, was released on June 30, 1994. This report should be viewed as a likely basis for a federal proposal which attempts to eliminate the Government Commitment to the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA) subsidy.

Alberta is concerned with the potential loss of the federal funding under the Western Grain Transportation Act. A resolution of the Crow Benefit issue will require adjustment funding to account for the reduction in distortion and, hence, income as the benefit is lost over a period of years, and as farmers make adjustments to the new environment in which they will be operating.

The issue of stabilization of farm income and resolution of the method of payment of the Crow Benefit, and the funding for adjustment, are separate and distinct issues. A safety net program attempts to enhance short- and medium-term income by reducing the effects of fluctuations caused by production and market risks while simultaneously facilitating sectoral adjustments to ensure the long-term economic sustainability and adaptation of the sector. The Crow Benefit has never had any influence on world price, nor dealt with the fluctuation in such prices caused by production and market risks.

As well, with a change in method of payment, there will be increasing pressure on farmers' net incomes. In order to deal with this eventuality, there must be a significant increase in grain handling and transportation system efficiency, with the resulting reduced costs passed on to farmers.

Proposal:

1. The payment of the Government Commitment under the Western Grain Transportation Act must remain in western Canada.
2. The payment to farmers must not be tied to other stabilization programs, but must exist as a separate and distinct payment to farmers.
3. The dollar amount of the federal commitment must be returned to the level of the 1992-93 commitment, namely \$720 million.
4. The federal commitment should be split as follows:
 - a) An annual payment of \$680 million, paid to farmers for a ten-year period. A net present value calculation on the existing Government Commitment in perpetuity is still a larger amount than a net present value calculation of \$720 million paid for a ten-year period and, therefore, still represents a savings for the federal government.

- b) The remaining \$40 million of the \$720 million Government Commitment will be used for other adjustment and transition measures, including branch line abandonments, short line railways, and other adjustment costs.
 - c) An additional sum of money will be required for the resolution of the pooling of seaway costs. Since the seaway issue is not part of the WGTA issue, an additional sum of money should be made available for a temporary adjustment.
5. The annual amount to be spent each year by the federal government would be initially allocated by province based on historical entitlement. The payment to farmers within each province can differ provided that the payments remain GATT green, de-linked from income support measures, and do not create cross border problems.
 6. The existing process for the annual establishment of rail freight rates and the quadrennial railway cost review under the WGTA will be retained, with the National Transportation Agency continuing to direct the process. This process will set a ceiling on rail freight rates with complete flexibility under the ceiling for negotiation of rates beneath the ceiling.
 7. A benchmarking study should be undertaken, funded by the prairie provinces and the federal government, to establish a baseline for the Canadian system compared with other grain handling and transportation systems around the world. The benchmarking study will be used to set targets for parts of the Canadian system to achieve over a period of time. These targets will be used to generate the costs savings and efficiency gains in the handling/transport system.
 8. A review of the regulatory and institutional environment should be undertaken in conjunction with the federal government. The regulatory and institutional environment should be examined to determine what, if any, changes are required to reduce barriers, to improve system efficiency, to rectify deficiencies relative to our competitors, and to meet the needs of farmers now and in the future.

Air drill evaluation promotes benefits

A new air drill, with independent wing movement and uniform penetration, may make seeding easier in the future says an Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre (AFMRC) specialist.

"The design of the Morris Maxim air drill frame allows the wings to move independently from the main frame. This allows the drill to maintain uniform penetration across the width of the unit in varying field conditions," says Greg Magyar, a field technologist at the centre. He adds the initial field levelling of the unit was easier when the operator had help to level the wings to the main frame.

AFMRC recently released an evaluation report on the Morris Maxim air drill. The drill is designed for use with various makes and models of air seeders and is suitable for direct and secondary seeding operations.

The report contains information on the quality of work, ease of operation and adjustment, power requirements and operator safety.

"The 390 lb. shank trip force minimized tripping of shank assemblies which maintained uniform seed and fertilizer placement. The four row drill allowed for good residue flow and the clearance of the trip assembly made operating the unit in stony conditions very good," says Magyar.

For the 39-foot Morris Maxim air drill report [please quote report #712] or for more information other air drills, contact the Alberta Machinery Research Centre, in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

Contact: *Greg Magyar*
329-1212

Agri-News briefs

Joint pulse and soft wheat tours this week

The Alberta Pulse Growers Commission and the Alberta Soft Wheat Producers Commission are offering two tours this week. The Bow Island area tour is Wednesday July 27. The next day focuses on the Vauxhall research substation. The Bow Island tour includes: pulse plots at the Bow Island research substation; pea

and bean fertility trials; soft wheat breeder plots; AC Reed and Fielder Comparisons; and, Provide on beans. Buses will leave the Bow Island Provincial Building promptly at 9 a.m. The Vauxhall area tour starts at the Vauxhall research substation at 9 a.m. on July 27. Plots include: bean breeding trials; pea and bean fertility trials; upright beans and row spacing trials; soft wheat breeding trials; and, Provide on beans. Barbecue lunches follow both morning tours. For more information or to register, call Beata Lees at 381-5127 or Joerg Klempnauer at 655-2420.

Alberta Agriculture minister in Asia

Alberta's agriculture minister is currently in the middle of a 15-day trade mission to Asia. Walter Paszkowski left on July 15 and will return on July 30 after stops in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. The trade mission will reinforce existing commercial relationships between Alberta agri-food exporters and Asian markets. This mission will also encourage Alberta exporters to expand their involvement with priority markets in Asia. The mission follows up initiatives arising from Premier Ralph Klein's mission last fall. "Our success in further developing trade in the Asia-Pacific region will be a significant factor in Alberta's efforts to build a \$20 billion agri-food processing industry early in the next century," says Paszkowski, referring to one of the goals set out in the agriculture ministry's three-year business plan. The Asia-Pacific region offers Alberta exporters one of the largest potential markets in the global marketplace, the world's fastest growing economic region. The Asia-Pacific region is Alberta's second largest export market for agriculture and food products. The United States is Alberta's largest export market. Market diversification and access are essential for the long-term success of Alberta's agriculture and food industry. "Now, more than ever, we must work toward the goal of producing what we can sell, rather than trying to sell what we produce," says Paszkowski. "Right now, Alberta and Canada are not consistently keeping pace with the overall growth in this market. While Alberta is well positioned to increase trade in these markets, there needs to be further long-term commitment by industry to pursue these markets. I believe Alberta businesses are up to the challenge offered by the opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region." For more information, contact John Cotton, senior trade director, in Edmonton at (403)427-4241.

Lethbridge area pulse tour tomorrow (July 26)

The Alberta Pulse Growers Commission will hold its zone one tour tomorrow (July 26). The Lethbridge area tour runs from 9 a.m. to noon. Interested participants are to meet at the Agriculture Canada Lethbridge research station conference room. Tour plots include: new herbicides for peas and lentils; pea variety fertility trials; and, regional pea, bean and lentil trials plus an exotic crops demonstration site. A barbecue lunch follows. For more information or to register, call Beata Lees at 381-5127 or Joerg Klempnauer at 655-2420.

Ram super sire field day August 13

Sheep breeders can see how the right ram can make them more profits at a super sire field day August 13 in Lethbridge. The field day starts at 10:30 a.m. at the Agriculture Canada Lethbridge research station. "No matter what your ewe flock, the ram you choose affects your returns from slaughter lambs," notes Kim Stanford, provincial sheep specialist. During the field day

participants will see rams, the ewes they bred and their lambs. The field day is \$10 per person or \$25 for a family. The field day is a co-production of the Southern Alberta Sheep Breeders Association, the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission and Alberta Agriculture. For more information, contact Kim Stanford in Lethbridge at 381-5150.

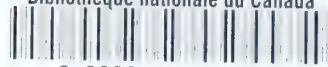
August 10 deadline for dairy award of distinction nominations

August 10 is the nomination deadline for the 1994 Provincial Dairy Award of Distinction. Any group or individual may submit a resume of a person who has made a major contribution to the dairy industry. Up to three recipients will be selected and honored on November 2 during the Westerner Dairy Showcase. Nominees can be any age, but must be or have been a dairy farmer. Posthumous nominations are accepted. Eligible recipients must be or have been active in or made a contribution to the dairy industry or related organization. Nominees should also be or have been active in their community. Nominee resumes should be forwarded to the Westerner Exposition Association, Provincial Dairy Award of Distinction, Box 176, Red Deer, Alberta, T4N 5E8.

Devonian Botanical Garden offers variety of courses for all ages

The University of Alberta's Devonian Botanical Garden offers a variety of summer courses and workshops for children, adults, teachers and commercial horticulturists. Minimizing lawn maintenance (August 28) is designed for commercial horticulturists. Instructor is Dennis McKeran of Olds College who specializes in turf management. Children's programs include nature study day camps, crafts and arts. There are also family programs including nature's world topics such as ponds and pond animals. Adult summer courses include fresh herbal foods, old time perennials for you yard and hunting for edible mushrooms. There is a fee for all courses. A complete brochure on summer and fall courses is available. The Devonian garden is located 5 km north of Devon on Highway 60, approximately a half hour drive from downtown Edmonton. For more information, contact Gordon Neilsen, education co-ordinator, at 987-2064.

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AGRI-NEWS

August 1, 1994

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Reclaimed wells model amending agreement available

A model amending agreement, negotiated by the provincial Farmers' Advocate's office, is a new way to solve an old issue between farmers and the energy industry.

"Oil and gas well site reclamation and compensation has been a contentious issue for the last few years and particularly since late 1990," says Wallace Daley, Alberta's Farmers' Advocate.

Oil companies began asking farmers to sign a release when the well site on their land had been cleaned up. Current regulations require the energy company to fully reclaim a site and then must receive a reclamation certificate before it can stop paying farmers annual compensation for a well site.

Farmers aren't legally required to sign such a release when a well site is abandoned by the energy company. "If farmers signed a release, then the company no longer had to pay annual compensation even when a reclamation certificate hadn't been issued.

"In many cases, landowners no longer received compensation from the company even if the site hadn't been accepted as reclaimed and further restoration was required. Companies felt they shouldn't have to pay the full amount for a site no longer in use that had been properly cleaned up," explains Daley.

Last year the Farmers' Advocate's office negotiated a model amending agreement. Nearly a year later in March 1994, this amendment to lease agreements was reviewed by both agriculture and energy industry representatives. Both sides agreed to drafting a final version of the model agreement.

The model agreement amends the lease between the farmer, or any landowner, and the energy company. "It allows farmers to protect their legal rights and ensures the company pursue the legally required reclamation certificate," says Daley.

"At the same time, the compensation – or rent – the energy company pays the farmer decreases. This reflects the fact that the well site has been cleaned up, but not yet certified as reclaimed. We believe the amending agreement is fair to both sides," he adds.

The model amending agreement is voluntary. Daley says its been used in many different forms and has been well received by the agricultural community. The model is sanctioned by the Farmers'

Advocate's office and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. "We believe these endorsements should increase acceptance of the amending agreement model in both agricultural and energy communities," says Daley.

Daley adds the agreement was achieved because both sides preferred a negotiated solution to an imposed regulation.

Samples of the model amending agreement are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices as well as the Farmers' Advocate's office in Edmonton. The address is 305, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 and the telephone number is (403)427-2433.

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Alberta
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s' Advocate's office can also provide individuals and s with more information about the model amending or any other surface rights issues.

Paul Vasseur
427-2433

Wallace Daley
427-2433

an habitat topic at field

itat management is one of the featured topics at a voted to water supply and quality issues.

ible energy and pasture water systems that pay" field st 17 in Pincher Creek. The morning agenda is resentations on a variety of water supply and quality afternoon includes a tour with demonstrations at the ewable Energy Test Site (ARETS).

rs we added the information sessions to provide ith a better opportunity to meet with researchers as a range of renewable energy systems in operation," hang, an Alberta Agriculture energy engineer.

cularly pleased that Peggy Strankman, the Canadian Association environmental co-ordinator, will talk , water and fish. She'll update participants on tal issues the cattle industry is facing as well as a : riparian habitat management project," he adds.

Cattle Commission and Trout Unlimited project umber of demonstration sites on trout streams in erta. Management strategies for each of the sites l this spring. Riparian habitat includes food, cover, air, pace for animal and plant life along waterways such . These areas are often islands of wildlife habitat in an landscape.

rea provides safe travel corridors as well as food and ds and animals. Trees and shrubs along the : shade and cool the water, making it more attractive riparian zone along the waterway also stabilizes rs and acts as a filter for soil eroded from agricultural ell, it reduces nutrient levels from rural and urban ns, and in turn, harmful vegetation and algae growth.

says the co-operative project, which also includes culture's public lands services and Alberta ital Protection's fish and wildlife services, has been thusiastically. Project partners have spoken about the wide range of groups – from naturalists to fisheries l from producer organizations to conservation s.

icers have been very interested and supportive she erally when habitat is improved for wildlife, it's also r cattle. There are very few cases when it isn't a ation," she says.

will also get a quick overview of national ital issues and how they might make an impact on pers.

Other morning session topics are water from dugouts and cattle performance; alternative pasture water systems; improving dugout water through aeration; and, using solar and wind power on the farm.

In the afternoon at the test site, manufacturers and suppliers will describe their systems. Site staff will talk about test systems and how they have worked.

For more information or to register, call any of the following Alberta Agriculture district offices: Barrhead at 674-8252; Red Deer at 340-5342; Airdrie at 948-8537; or, Lethbridge at 381-5112. You can also call the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

ARETS evaluates and demonstrates renewable energy technologies (solar and wind systems) for agricultural applications. ARETS is funded by the Department of Natural Resources Canada, Alberta Energy and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

Contact: Peggy Strankman John Chang
275-8558 427-2181

Stepping into a specialist's shoes

On Monday May 2 Jeff Millang began fielding questions as an Alberta Agriculture district farm management specialist based in Stettler.

The physical journey from his former job wasn't that far, a 94 km stretch of highway between Coronation and Stettler. However, his new role as a specialist rather than a generalist, was a more demanding journey. But at least, Millang says, his new job has been basically what he expected.

Farm management specialist is one of the positions created as the department restructured its field services and moved to specialization. This change came from an assessment of client needs. The move also coincided with a government commitment to cut costs and reduce the provincial deficit.

When presented a list of the new positions Millang saw two possibilities – one of the economic-type specialties or beef. While he took the general program on his way to a BSc in agriculture degree at the University of Alberta, he had concentrated on economic and beef courses.

His education was backed up by his experience in district positions he held during his seven years with the provincial agriculture department. In Three Hills he'd done a lot of marketing and farm management work. In Coronation, the emphasis switched to beef.

For generalists like Millang, the new specialist position is one of knowledge and career growth. "They're expanding their knowledge base in a particular discipline," says Alan Hall, central regional director. "Our aim is specialists who not only have that

more focused knowledge, but also can relate their knowledge to the local area," he adds.

Millang sees what his own training needs are, but believes he can increase his knowledge and skills very quickly. "As a generalist I could provide farmers with the basic concepts and simple answers. And then with a little time and energy on both our parts, we could begin using those basic concepts to do some analysis. More in depth work was often referred to a department regional specialist or to another professional such as an accountant." However, Millang adds he's confident he'll be able to take farmers much further into analysis by the end of 1994.

So far his new role has meant more time on the phone fielding calls from both the district and further afield. During the summer holiday shuffle he's had client calls from the Rockies to the Saskatchewan border in central Alberta. The day he was interviewed for this article he'd talked to people in Cremona, Rimbey and Altario.

"Really there aren't any borders," says Millang. "I expect calls from the Battle River south in general. The geography doesn't matter. Our clients are number one. If there's anything I can do to help them, I will. It doesn't matter where they're from."

This philosophy is basic to Alberta Agriculture's new and improved way of doing business. The district office is still a customer's starting point, the first stop or call for information. By contacting the district office the customer has access to all 52 district offices across the province, as well as all of the rest of the department and related organizations and businesses who might be the best choice for information in a particular situation.

"That's the key," says Hall. "You come in, and we'll connect you to who you need to talk to. We'll even do the work of the initial contact."

For now, Millang is immersed in his new role. But not so preoccupied that he isn't looking to the future. Eventually, he says, his specialist role will be more in-depth consultation and analysis with his farm customers and less short, quick answers.

"Those quick questions such as the price of hay will remain, but along with the answer I'll probably add that we should sit down later and look at production costs related to profits more closely," he says.

Contact: Jeff Millang
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Allan Hall
340-7611

Participation record again at 4-H beef heifer show

More 4-H members, more clubs and more cattle than ever before were at the 18th annual provincial 4-H beef heifer show.

"Over 175 4-H members from 65 different clubs brought some 200 head of cattle to the 1994 heifer show and judging contest. It just gets bigger and better," says Henry Wiegman, provincial 4-H agriculture specialist.

"There are an incredible number of young people with a terrific amount of knowledge about one of Alberta's largest industries. This is a great indication that the future of the cattle industry is strong," he adds.

Two east central 4-Hers were multiple winners at the three-day event. Ken Adair, of the Brownfield Club won the supreme crossbred grand championships with his three-year-old Simmental/Hereford cross cow/calf pair. Adair and Clint Sutter, of the Battle River Beef Club, topped the senior grooming contest and show ring judging. They also placed third in senior team judging. Sutter also claimed reserve supreme grand champion purebred honors with his two-year-old Simmental.

The show's supreme grand champion purebred was a three-year-old Angus cow shown by Clandonald 4-Her James Martin. Martin, a first-time provincial heifer show participant with an animal, also competed in the freshman class. Both the member's showmanship skills and the animal's conformation are judged. Martin earned the senior reserve champion freshman award.

Tammy Young, from the Camrose Multi Club, was the overall senior freshman class winner. Young, 18, also claimed the senior showmanship championship for the second straight year.

Tracey Noullett, a Wildrose Beef Club member from Valleyview, won the overall junior freshman title with her yearling Angus. Luke Schoening from the Foothills Club (Pincher Creek) was the reserve junior freshman champion with a Hereford yearling.

Liz Smith's Maine Anjou cross heifer was the reserve supreme crossbred champion. Smith is a member of the Lethbridge-Coaldale Beef Club.

In the showmanship classes, Jaime Marshall, 18, of Erskine Beef was second to Young in the senior division. Intermediate champ was 13-year-old David Grant of the Olds Multi Club, followed by Camrose Multi Club member Patricia Kozack, 14. Last year at her first provincial show, Kozack claimed four awards. Hometown participant Jackie Oberg, 11, of the Bashaw Beef Club was the junior showmanship champ, with Bryce Sutter, 12, of the Battle River Beef Club in second spot.

Top overall judge at the show was Geoff Felske from the Double Diamond Club of Onoway. Felske claimed top senior individual and top individual reasons classes along the way. Shannon Northey of Bashaw claimed the intermediate judge title. Heather Marcinkowski, of Strome and the Wavy Lake Beef Club, was top junior individual judge. Marcinkowski was another double winner in the team judging contest.

"Team judging prizes went to 4-Hers from throughout the province," notes Wiegman. Pembina West (Westlock area) team Ryer Atkinson and Christy Hoy received the top junior prize. Marcinkowski and Erin Chromik won the intermediate division title, with Foothills (Pincher Creek) Beef members Lindsye Murfin and Charles Schoening taking the senior category honors.

All the team grooming contest winners were from central Alberta. They included Adair and Sutter in the senior class. Kristi and Kurt

Trefiak, winners in different divisions in 1993, teamed up to claim the intermediate championship in 1994. They represented the Edgerton Beef Club. Hometowners Lise Luft and Sarah Northey were the junior team winners.

The Double Diamond club from the Oneway area captured the club herdmanship award for the first time.

The Bashaw and District Agricultural Society hosts the provincial competition. Major co-sponsors are UFA and the Alberta Treasury Branches. [See separate story this issue.]

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

pleased to support and give a hand to the future of Alberta's cattle industry."

Contact: Henry Wiegman John Lee Larry Fuson
427-2541 258-4569 493-7387

Patrons speak out

There were beams a-plenty at the recent 18th annual provincial 4-H beef heifer show, from sunny skies and delighted organizers through cheerful participants and proud patrons.

"Warm, dry show days were a bonus this year after a couple of wet shows," notes Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H agriculture specialist. "More important though, was the third consecutive record breaking number of participants at the show. The level of showing, fitting and judging skills is tremendous. Members also really have a learning experience, not just through the competition classes, but by getting to know fellow 4-Hers from all over the province.

"Part of this show's success is also due to its sponsors," he adds. "The Bashaw and District Agriculture Society has been there since the beginning to support the 4-H beef breeding project through this provincial show.

"This show has contributed to the industry with many former participants now playing roles in the beef industry as purebred and commercial cattle producers," he notes.

This year organizers paid special tribute to the show's major sponsors. The Bashaw Agricultural Society was the first day's patron-of-the-day. Alberta Treasury Branches was day two patron-of-the-day. The final day's patron was UFA.

The Treasury Branch sponsored judging, showmanship and grooming contests, with UFA sponsor of the conformation classes. Patron representatives posed for pictures with their class winners.

The patrons were enthusiastic about the 1994 show, proud to be part of this event, in particular, and the Alberta 4-H program, in general.

"There was a most impressive quality and quantity of cattle," says UFA's John Lee, "But, more important is that the quality of 4-H members is absolutely great.

"Participation from all over the province speaks loud and clear about what a great event this is," he adds.

"All members, regardless of placing, are winners just for being part of the whole experience," says Larry Fuson, the Treasury Branch representative during its patron-of-the-day. "We're

Provincial 4-H dairy show score nearly perfect

The 48th annual edition of the provincial 4-H dairy show attracted seven out of eight of the province's dairy clubs

"We were only missing the Lethbridge area club," notes Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H agriculture specialist. "But the 55 4-H members who participated in the judging, clipping and conformation classes represent half of all dairy members.

"Both familiar and new faces were at the competition. There were multiple winners, repeat winners and first-time winners in the events. But the show's real success was the quality of participation," he adds. "For example, only the members who placed first through third at their clubs qualified for the provincial competition. That made for hard to judge classes."

Len Congdon of the Bashaw Club claimed senior and overall showmanship awards for the second consecutive year. His niece Stacy won the intermediate title with Linda Rietveld of the Sturgeon Valley Club as the top junior.

Top spots in junior and intermediate judging were also a family affair. Jeramie Harink of the Lacombe Club was the junior winner with cousin Krista the intermediate winner. Both were runner-ups in their showmanship division.

The top senior and overall top judge was Siegfried Wegewitz of the Twilite Club. Top overall for reasons was Julene Copithorne from the Mountain View Club. She teamed with clubmate Linsey Chalack as the top show ring judging team. Chalack was also a member of the top overall team with Laura Jeffery and Dereck Van Sickle.

Van Sickle, who was top intermediate and overall clipper last, moved up to the senior class in 1994. Again, he won his class and the overall clipping title.

Unlike last year when the Mountain View Club dominated the clipping results, this year the junior title went to Tyler Congdon of Bashaw and the intermediate to Matt Hofstra of Rollyview.

The show's supreme conformation grand champion went to a junior yearling shown by Caden Chalack of the Mountain View Club. Crystal Crest's yearling was the supreme reserve grand champion. Crest is a member of the Sturgeon Valley Club.

Len Congdon and Linsey Chalack also returned to the winner's circle in the conformation classes. Chalack won both summer and winter yearling classes. Congdon showed the calf champion.

Amanda Taylor of the Mountain View club was at the halter of the intermediate calf champion.

"As with the last few years the club herdmanship competition was hotly contested. Last year's winner the Twilite Club from the

Cherhill area finished second to the Mountain View Club," says Wiegman. The Mountain View Club also took home the club herd award.

The annual provincial 4-H dairy show is held during the Westerner Days Exhibition in Red Deer.

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

4-H judging competition moves to summer and Olds

August and Olds are the new time and place for the annual provincial 4-H multi-species judging clinic and competition.

Since the competition began seven years ago, it's been held at Edmonton Northlands during its annual Farmfair in November. The Mountainview Agricultural Society is the new host with the competition part of its annual county fair.

The judging clinic and competition runs August 5 through 7. Clinic sessions will take place at Olds College with the judging events at the Olds fairground.

"Senior 4-H members qualify for the provincial event through district and regional judging events," says Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H agriculture specialist. "The whole provincial event is designed to increase 4-H members' skills. It's great grounding in general livestock knowledge, plus teaches evaluation and communication skills.

"It also gives them an appreciation of what judges are doing and thinking when the 4-H member is in a judging ring with their own animal," he adds.

There's another bonus for members. The top dozen competitors go on to international judging competitions at Regina's Agribition and Denver's National Western Stock Show. Other trips may also be awarded.

"Everyone goes home with a participation prize. Plus there are class and other competition prizes," notes Wiegman.

Members don't just judge, they attend instruction and information clinics before they judge livestock. The education sessions cover all five livestock species – dairy cattle, beef cattle, light horses, swine and sheep – as well as judging itself.

The 12 competition classes include conformation judging by rating each livestock class, written reasons and oral reasons.

"We're very pleased that our major competition sponsor, Alberta Treasury Branches, will continue," says Wiegman. "As well, Uniblock Canada is continuing its sponsorship of the trip awards."

Contact: Henry Wiegman Donna Smith
427-2541 556-3770

Alberta 4-Hers on the fly

Tomorrow (August 2) a dozen Alberta 4-Hers are flying to separate western destinations.

Headed to the Western Provinces Seminar held in Langley, B.C. are 10 delegates. Two more 4-Hers are off to California. All 12 earned the trips at the provincial selections program this spring. Trip awards are based on community and 4-H involvement plus interpersonal skills.

In B.C. the Albertans will join their counterparts from across Western Canada to identify the similarities and differences between rural and urban life. The rural-urban connections seminar runs August 2 through 7.

Shelley Andrews of Sherwood Park, Les Burgemeister of Hanna, Stephen Clark of Fawcett, Erin Kasbohm of Westlock, Maureen Mappin of Byemore, Jason Nielsen of Alix, Curtis Perry and Jeadene Wakefield of Coronation, Don Vermeeren of Scandia and Michael Wharmby of Lamont are the Alberta delegates. Lori McRae, Alberta Agriculture's 4-H home economics assistant will accompany the seminar delegates.

"Our delegates, plus other 4-H delegates from the Canada's western provinces, will gather together with urban representatives to participate in this learning opportunity," says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H programs specialist.

"The program emphasizes skill development, leadership training and awareness of the agriculture and food industry. Delegates will be challenged on their understanding and beliefs regarding specific issues, will discover alternative choices in answers and solutions, and will be empowered to become involved in the processes that exist to understand and influence rural/urban changing dynamics from the perspective of sustainable agriculture," she explains. The Canada Agri-Food Development Initiative and the Canada-British Columbia Green Plan for Agriculture are the seminar sponsors.

Two urban Albertans will join the 4-Hers. They are Girl Guide representatives Michelle Ancelin of Calgary and Sabrina Maupin of Rocky Mountain House.

Los Angeles, California may be Krista Lubeck and Travis Shand's destination, but they aren't looking for fame and fortune.

Lubeck of Worsley and Shand of Cermona will participate in a 10-day California exchange. Time will be spent with a host family, but Lubeck and Shand will also represent Alberta at the "4-H All Star Conference" August 5 through 7 at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA).

As the exchange sponsor, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce is honouring Lubeck and Shand at a send-off banquet August 2 in Calgary. Flying out later that same day, both will be met by their host family in San Diego.

"This exchange program involves its participants in leadership roles, shows them the process of addressing certain issues, and overall, enhances their feelings of self-worth," says Stark.

"It's a time when 4-H members can take what they've learned in their 4-H career, and begin interacting with others on a whole different level," she adds.

Both Lubeck and Shand were chosen as regional ambassadors at Alberta 4-H Selections '94. A regional ambassador is one of the highest honors an Alberta 4-H member can achieve.

Lubeck is a 10-year 4-H member who completed a variety of projects including light and young horse, beef and junior leader. Active on the family farm, she also enjoys a variety of outdoor pursuits and is still active in 4-H at the club and district level.

A recent grade 12 graduate, Shand has been a 4-H member for eight years. He completed beef, heifer and junior leadership projects. He plans to attend university this fall, majoring in broadcasting.

<i>Contact:</i>	<i>Marguerite Stark</i>	<i>Lori McRae</i>
	<i>948-8510</i>	<i>422-4444</i>
	<i>Krista Lubeck</i>	<i>Travis Shand</i>
	<i>685-2405</i>	<i>637-3937</i>

Alberta Agriculture appointments

Market development team line-up changes

Alberta Agriculture's market development team has made some recent line-up changes through secondment and new assignments.

Bob Prather moves to the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs (FIGA) as director of FIGA's international division for two years. Most recently Prather was a senior trade director covering Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia for Alberta Agriculture.

Another senior trade director, Arnold deLeeuw, will also be on assignment for the next two years. He'll serve as vice president of trade and export services for the Alberta Food Processors Association (AFPA). His role will be helping to develop a trade and export program.

Two market development staff members will take on new responsibilities based in Japan. Jeff Kucharski is the new managing director of Alberta's Tokyo trade office. Kucharski has a strong knowledge of Alberta's agriculture and food industry. His previous work experience in Japan includes a two-year exchange position with Seiyu, a major Japanese retail company, and set-up of the Canada Beef Export Federation's Tokyo office.

Duane Sandberg has been appointed to a new position created by FIGA as a result of the Premier's trade mission to Asia in 1993. He's now Alberta's trade representative in Hokkaido. The position is a trial one. It started on June 1 and will run six months.

Returning to her job at Alberta Pool is Peggy LeSueur-Brymer. She spent a year at marketing services on a secondment. "We hope to build on the relationship we've established with the Pool," says Cliff Wulff, director of marketing services.

A new face in marketing services, but not to Alberta Agriculture, is Dale Engstrom. Engstrom is currently on a two-year secondment from the department's animal industry division. Most recently he was acting head of the cattle and sheep branch.

"As a trade director, Dale will use his strong production knowledge specifically in Mexican and other key American and developing markets," says Wulff.

John Cotton, who has been on assignment from FIGA at the Tokyo office since 1988, will lead Alberta Agriculture's Asia Pacific geographic team as senior trade director for the next two years.

Also on assignment with marketing services is Henry Ip. His responsibilities will be in the Asia Pacific, specifically China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Ip has a diverse work background with the federal government.

Another senior trade director is in his second year of a three-year secondment to the federal Department of External Affairs. David Wong was a long-time senior international trade director for Asia before taking the Taiwan posting. He is now based in Taipei as the agriculture and food representative in the Canadian trade office.

Marketing services trade directors work in one of two geographic teams – Asia Pacific or North America. Each trade director also specializes in a particular product. Those include cereal grains, oilseeds, special crops, beef, dairy, pork, forages, lambs and wool, poultry, alternative livestock and horses.

Contact: *Cliff Wulff*
427-4241

Agri-News briefs

Zone 3 pulse tour August 4

The Alberta Pulse Growers Commission's zone three will hold its annual pulse tour August 4. Pre-registration is required by **tomorrow** (August 2). The tour runs from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. The tour leaves from the Namao Community Hall (one half-mile east of highway 28 on highway 32). Selected sites in the Namao and Fort Saskatchewan areas are highlighted. This includes pulse agronomy, field pea varieties, lentil production/varieties and cropping after field pea production. Producers Tom Jackson and Doug Craig will discuss their experiences with pulses. Featured speakers during the tour include: Bob Park, special crops specialist; Sheau-Fang Hwang, of the Vegreville Environmental Centre; and, Ken Lopetinsky, pulse and special crops specialist. There are also industry displays and representatives to answer questions. The tour concludes with a barbecue supper at the tour's starting point, the Namao hall. Registration is \$15. To register, call one of these Alberta Agriculture district offices: Morinville at 939-4351, Lamont at 895-2219 or Barrhead at 674-8213.

Unifarm HOPE line goes on the road

The Unifarm HOPE line is going on the road this summer to promote its services. The toll-free line [1-800-361-8572] offers information and referral services to rural Albertans. The HOPE line display will be at a number of fairs through August. These are: Vegreville, August 1-3; Olds, August 4-6; Bonnyville, August 7; Castor, August 12; Drayton Valley, August 19-20; and, Ponoka, August 23-24. As well as learning more about the line and its services, you can also see the latest techniques and aids for daily living available for people who need special services. If you need information or a referral, call the HOPE line at 1-800-361-8572. For more information, about the HOPE line, contact Florence Trautman at 963-6870 or 451-5912.

4-Hers dare to be themselves

Two Alberta 4-H members will let their true leadership skills shine through at the Saskatchewan 4-H "I Dare You" program July 28 to August 3. Kelly Ulry of Olds and Gayle Hegland of Wembley are at Camp Rayner hosted by the Saskatchewan 4-H branch. "The program promotes leadership and public speaking skills at the senior 4-H member level," says Marguerite Stark, 4-H provincial program specialist. "Both Kelly and Gayle will find themselves involved in seminars, listening to guest speakers and participating in group activities dealing with current issues." Their trips are sponsored by two different organizations. Ulry is sponsored by the Youth Speech and Debate Committee of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, Hegland's by Edmonton Northlands. Both Ulry and Hegland were chosen to attend the program at Alberta 4-H Selections '94. For more information, contact Kelly Ulry at 335-9719 or Gayle Hegland at 766-2450.

Grainfest returns to Winnipeg

Grainfest'94 is the latest edition of an international festival in Winnipeg that celebrates the importance of grain and to promote grain-related products and technologies to the rest of the world. The celebration was first introduced two years ago. The harvest parade on August 2 kicks-off the festival. Union Station is the site of a three-day Grain as Food Exposition August 2 through 4. A grain industry breakfast runs August 4. A 'night of wheat chaff and barleycorn' features entertainment and dinner. Among the performances are skits by the Manitoba Farm Writers and Broadcasters Association poking fun at grain industry leaders. A charity auction follows with proceeds going to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The wind-up event is the harvest moon cotillion. Net proceeds go to a local food bank. The first week of August is proclaimed International Grain Week by the city. For more information, call Wendy Miller in Winnipeg at (204)982-2111 or fax (204)942-1841.

AGRI-NEWS

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Bear rumbles into oilseed market

The dreaded bear has put a clench on the oilseed market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Statistics Canada provided the first piece of bearish news – a 40 per cent increase in Canadian canola acreage for 1994," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch. The survey report was released June 30.

"The survey total of 14.4 million acres was even higher than the 13.1 million figure from the March seeding intentions report," Dooley adds. With current crop conditions, a record crop of about 7.5 million tonnes is possible.

The July United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) crop report brought the same sort of bearish news. Soybean production estimates were raised by 55 million bushels. Ending stock estimates for both 1993-94 and 1994-95 crop years also increased.

"During July both soybean and canola futures moved sharply lower with the production estimates," notes Dooley. "From a market sense, negative acreage and production reports plus favorable growing conditions weighed prices down."

There is a factor that could temper the bear's hold. August is still an important time for the U.S. soybean crop. "But, if the good weather continues and North American crops are good, then the high prices of 1993-94 will be a fond memory in the 1994-95 crop year," says Dooley.

On the positive side, buying interest for Canada's new crop canola has been good and old crop carryover is relatively tight. Europe, Mexico, the U.S. and perhaps China are expected to make significant buys. Japan, a traditional customer, is expected to repeat.

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

Bumper corn crop equals depressed feedgrain

An expected bumper U.S. corn crop sets the stage for depressed feedgrain prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Futures market response to the excellent growing conditions has been dramatic," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"From mid-June to mid-July corn futures contracts plummeted from life-of-contract highs to life-of-contracts lows," notes Gietz. "And the increasing likelihood of bumper yields quickly alleviated any lingering concerns about light carryover stocks."

Gietz says Western barley futures could drift lower with ideal growing conditions, possible to the \$80 to \$85 per tonne range

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basis the November contract. Winnipeg oats, currently trading below \$100 per tonne could easily slip below \$90 per tonne before forming a bottom price, he adds.

"U.S. and Canadian oats futures already dipped sharply in the early summer," he notes. Excellent yield prospects for world oat crops don't help the price picture. The world's three main production regions are Canada, the central U.S. and Scandinavia.

Declining corn prices and an outlook for improved quality Canadian wheat will affect Canadian wheat exports to the U.S. says Gietz's colleague Matthew Machielse.

"Those two factors will have a bigger impact than the International Trade Commission (ITC) report ruling Canadian wheat imports were harming U.S. domestic programs so a tariff should be added to the Canadian imports," says Machielse.

Canadian wheat exports to the U.S. are estimated to hit a 2.1 million tonne level in the 1993-94 crop year. Another half million tonnes of durum wheat went south of the Canada-U.S. border.

"This export level resulted from an abundance of low quality wheat, a relatively high corn price and poor overseas demand," says Machielse. "As well, the inappropriate use of credits under their own export enhancement program (EEP) shorted U.S. mills of quality durum.

"Virtually all of these factors will change in the new crop year, suggesting the Canadian wheat export levels to the U.S. will return to long-term averages," he adds.

For more information, contact Machielse at 427-5387 or Gietz at 427-5376.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Matthew Machielse
427-5387

Remarkable rally doesn't change six month outlook

The U.S. fed cattle market staged a remarkable rally hitting highs over \$70 per hundredweight in mid-July, but the longer term outlook is still for lower prices than the same time last year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The rapid price increase supported many contentions that the previous price collapse was overdone," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

The rally resulted from a combination of a U.S. government purchase equal to about a half day's production along with increased retail demand for the cheaper beef.

"These two factors provided a much needed spark to the market," he says. "Now that prices have slipped back a little, there's a general consensus the U.S. market has had its lows for 1994."

Gietz says the rally caught nearly everyone in the trade by surprise. However, he hasn't changed his six month slaughter cattle outlook. He says he expects U.S. prices to trade in a \$65 to \$70/cwt. range this summer, improving to the low \$70s by the

year end. He bases his Alberta price forecasts on a 73 cent Canadian dollar to its American counterpart.

"I expect an average Alberta slaughter steer price around \$85/cwt. during August. I see prices climbing to a \$87 average in September, \$89 in October and \$92 in November. A \$91 to \$92 range should continue into January," he says.

"As has been the case in recent years the exchange rate could again become a factor. Pay attention to its movement up or down," he adds.

The July fed cattle price rally and a collapse of feedgrain markets has definitely improved the feeder cattle outlook Gietz says. "In late summer, heavy feeder steers may trade around the \$110 mark, around \$5 per hundredweight higher than an earlier-forecast."

Gietz also expects calf prices to go slightly higher than earlier estimates. "A \$125/cwt. mid-point is possible for good 600 lb. steer calves," he says.

His advice to producers is to consider marketing calves a little earlier or later than the typical late October sale. "However," he cautions, "be prepared for the possibility of somewhat lower prices for your 1995 and 1996 calf crops."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

The calls keep coming...

When it comes to supplying answers to questions about beef production, Brian Palichuk isn't a rookie. But the types of questions, who asks them and what else he does did change on May 9.

Palichuk joined the Alberta Agriculture team in 1981. His first year was spent working in the Peace region. A dozen years ago he came to the Brooks district office. He was hired to cover the livestock side in the two-person office, but as with all former district agriculturists, Palichuk was a generalist.

He still works from an Alberta Agriculture district office, although he's now based in Medicine Hat. He also has the new title of beef specialist, one of two dozen such specialists now found across the province of Alberta.

Palichuk will need a little less adjustment than many of his colleagues who have moved into specialist positions. Not only had he been the livestock person at the Brooks office, he's also been acting livestock specialist for the southern region since October 1993.

While Palichuk's service area is primarily the Medicine Hat, Brooks and Foremost areas, like all of the department's new field specialists he's accessible by anyone in the province from any of the 52 Alberta Agriculture district offices. "Most of my customers are going to be from the counties of 40 Mile and Newell, the M.D. of Cypress and special area two. But I've talked to customers outside of those boundaries," says Palichuk.

But like many of his counterparts, whether beef or something else is their speciality, Palichuk says he's looking forward to being a specialist who can be more up-to-date in his discipline and more involved with research and its local applications.

"The real benefit will be for the customer," he says. "I'll be able to offer more detailed and complete information. When you were a generalist, you're only able to skim the surface of most areas.

"The key point to the changes – of restructuring and moving to specialization – is customer service. We're beefing it up. And, with specialization, we can narrow in on key areas to more truly address local producers' needs," he adds.

Each specialist will have a broad-based knowledge in their special area. Beef specialists like Palichuk will concentrate on beef production and management ranging through genetics and herd health, to nutrition and forages. Each person will need additional training in particular areas to expand their knowledge base. All 24 have met to discuss those needs.

Palichuk estimates about 20 per cent of the calls he deals with now are related to forage. "It's really hard to separate forage out from beef," he says. "It's an area I'm already comfortable in, but can learn more and also be involved in local demos or research applied in the area."

Part of his new job is getting to know potential partners for those projects including local agribusinesses and agricultural organizations.

Specialization also frees his time to concentrate on the beef discipline. As a beef specialist Palichuk says he won't have to spend time each year, for example, familiarizing himself with the Blue Book's contents. Blue book is the common term for the department's annual comprehensive guide to crop protection with chemicals.

Over the next six months Palichuk will spend time setting up a new filing system. He's refining his old one, and also putting it on the department's computer network allowing other specialists to access his information files.

Two months into the new job, Palichuk has found he's answering about the same number questions on the telephone or through office visits. He's still just as busy with farm calls.

"I usually did about 300 a year," he says. "That's really how you build a clientele. It's an excellent way to build a rapport with you customers and develop their trust. The result is a strong working relationship."

But there's one thing about customer contact that has changed – at least for now. "I'm not getting calls in the evening or early morning since I've moved to Medicine Hat," he says wryly. He says he expects that to change, too.

Contact: *Brian Palichuk*
529-9750

Looking for "lost" sheep

Unlike the nursery rhyme, market analysts are having a difficult time tracking down "lost" Alberta lamb production.

"These sheep won't be coming home on their own," says Ron Gietz, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

The problem is this. Statistics Canada inventory estimates show a rapidly growing ewe flock in the western provinces, particularly in Alberta. However, inspected lamb slaughter numbers in Alberta are declining. Federally inspected lamb slaughter peaked in 1992 at over 87,000 head. It has dropped rapidly since then, to just over 69,000 in 1993 to a projected 57,000 in 1994.

"Right now it looks like just under half – about 46 per cent – of Alberta's estimated lamb production will be slaughtered in Alberta. The rest will find a market outside the province," says Gietz.

Direct live exports into the U.S. may increase and reach 15,000 head. However, that still leaves about 64,000 head of Alberta production unaccounted for.

At the same time, Manitoba live exports to the U.S. are expected to increase by 25 per cent. Up to three-quarters of those lambs likely began their journey in Alberta. "But that still leaves about 55,000 head of Alberta lambs untraced," says Gietz.

"This is also where the trail gets cold," he adds. One reason is that interprovincial movements of lambs aren't tracked.

"It's well known in the trade that a large number of Alberta lambs find their way into Manitoba and some directly into Ontario. Many of the Manitoba-bound lambs later end up in Ontario. That's not surprising since this is where lamb demand is concentrated," explains Gietz.

"This theory is supported by preliminary Ontario lamb slaughter statistics that imply lamb slaughter could increase by as much as 50,000 head," he adds.

Contact: *Ron Gietz*
427-5376

Water source and cattle performance field day topic

Water quality concerns have been focused on salts and algae, but water source may be just as important says an Alberta Agriculture engineering technologist.

Orin Kenzie, along with one of his research colleagues from Agriculture Canada, will discuss what they've discovered about how water from dugouts can reduce cattle performance at a field day on August 17 in Pincher Creek.

The annual Alberta Renewable Energy Test Site (ARETS) field day is looking at renewable energy and pasture water systems that pay. It starts with presentations in the morning.

Kenzie and Water Willms, a range ecologist, will discuss the field trials they've done at a range research substation near Stavely, Alberta.

"We've found that the source of livestock's drinking water has a major effect on animal performance," says Kenzie. "In range management, water quality is usually ignored except when salts and toxic algae are a concern or when livestock can damage riparian zones,

"However, from our research it appears the water source must be given greater consideration to make better use of range resources."

The trials compared two water sources – fresh water delivered to a trough and water in a dugout. Twelve cow/calf pairs on rough fescue pasture in good condition were monitored. Over a 33-day period the cows that drank from the dugouts lost 0.2 kg and their calves gained 26.3 kg. The cows that drank fresh water in a trough gained 7.4 kg and their calves 33.9 kg.

The reason for the difference isn't clear says Kenzie. "Water quality analyses didn't show any reason for the differences in animal performance. There weren't any indicators of excessive dissolved solids. Algae growth was scarce and during the trials no blue-green algae was seen.

"This means we need to do more research to pinpoint the cause and find out whether simply pumping water into a trough is a solution," he adds. Kenzie and Willms will talk about some of the research projects designed to find out causes and get some answers.

Other morning session topics include: cattle, water and fish; alternative pasture water systems; improving dugout water through aeration; and, using solar and wind power on the farm.

Field day tours run in the afternoon. One stop is the ARETS site where solar and wind-powered water pumping and dugout aeration systems are tested and demonstrated.

Pre-registration is required by August 10. Registration fees of \$20 per person are payable at the door. For more information or to register, call any of the following Alberta Agriculture district offices: Barrhead at 674-8252; Red Deer at 340-5342; Airdrie at 948-8537; or, Lethbridge at 381-5112. You can also call the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

Participants also have the option of an extra tour the evening before the field day. A guided tour of electric wind farms in the Pincher Creek area is planned.

ARETS evaluates and demonstrates renewable energy technologies – solar and wind systems – for agricultural applications. ARETS is funded by the Department of Natural Resources Canada, Alberta Energy and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

Contact: John Chang
427-2181

Orin Kenzie
381-5112

Issues panel highlights ag ed institute

Teachers truly became students at the 1994 Summer Agricultural Education Institute in Fairview.

"The institutes have always had a strong hands-on element," says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture agricultural awareness specialist and co-ordinator of Alberta's Agriculture in the Classroom program.

"But the active learning took another step during this fifth annual institute," she adds.

The institute is a full-credit university course open to Alberta teachers and fourth year education students. During the eight days the participants are exposed to a wide range of the agriculture industry, from staying with a host family to meeting industry representatives and looking at their educational resources at a "trade" fair. To "graduate" the teacher-participants must design a lesson plan that brings agriculture into their classroom.

"That's what our issues panel did," says Gabert. "It gave the participants a chance to try out role-playing scenarios that could be used in the classroom."

The 30 teacher-participants divided into groups by interest in one of eight current agricultural-related issues. These included animal welfare, soil and water conservation, water quality, research and development, and food safety. All were given position papers to read and investigate.

"While this might have pulled some people out of their comfort zone, it also brought the individual out of a passive listening mode and into action. I believe the institute participants learned more about those issues in the preliminary preparation than they would have from just hearing from experts," says Gabert.

The groups were encouraged to search out the facts from legal, emotional, stakeholder, media and devil's advocate perspectives. The issues panel involved all eight expert speakers and the 30 institute participants sitting in a circle. The activity was scheduled to run three hours, but stretched to more than four before organizers called a halt.

"The interaction and interactive nature of the exercise allowed the participants to test appropriate and effective ways to deal with issues in their classrooms," says Gabert.

This year was the first time Fairview College hosted the annual event. "I think we were all impressed by our host's pride in their community and its generosity was very evident. The location also allowed a spotlight on northern, or the Peace's, agriculture," notes Gabert.

Gabert also acknowledges the institute wouldn't be possible without support from the industry and the institute's host community. "UFA is a major institute sponsor. There are all sorts of other agricultural organizations that support the institute in a variety of ways, from local businesses for tours to attending the mini-expo trade fair."

In 1995 the institute will return to Lethbridge Community College. Biotechnology will be a theme for next year's institute.

One of the institute's goals is encouraging teachers to incorporate agriculture in their classrooms. As well, institute graduates are encouraged to become their school's agricultural ambassadors. Some graduates have gone on to win national and provincial awards for their work.

For more information on the Summer Agricultural Education Institute, the Agricultural Ambassador Program or the Agriculture in the Classroom Program contact Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2403.

Contact: *Betty Gabert*
427-2403

Agri-News briefs

USDA reports set hog market tone

The hog market is again taking its tone from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) hog and pig reports and the news is negative says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "While the accuracy of these quarterly reports hasn't been stellar lately, they still influence the market," says Matthew Machielse of the market analysis and statistics branch. The report indicates high hog inventories and a more efficient herd. As a result, pork production is climbing even faster than breeding herd expansion. "The U.S. market is almost certain to see lower prices for market inventories," says Machielse. "But, the decline may be tempered by increased exports given the U.S. dollar's fall against foreign currencies." The fallout for Alberta producers is finding price protection. Machielse encourages producers to investigate the options market to protect themselves from sudden market moves. For more information, contact Machielse in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Special crop prices weakening

With continued bright crop prospects, special crop prices have weakened says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Record pea, lentil, mustard and canary seed production are possible," says Al Dooley. "Quality is the only concern as harvest approaches," he adds. "Lentil quality in particular." Actual lentil acreage is higher than both 1993 levels and stated seeding intentions in March. "However, there are indications all is not well in several growing areas, especially in Manitoba and parts of Saskatchewan," says Dooley. "We could be on our way to another year of highly variably lentil quality." This means good quality lentils could command more attractive prices in the new crop year. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Donalda couple Alberta's Outstanding Young Farmers

Lee and Shirley Erickson of Donalda are Alberta's 1994 Outstanding Young Farmers. They were awarded the title during Westerner Days in Red Deer. The Ericksons have been farming since 1978 and say they view farming as a career choice, rather than a way of life. Their 4,000 acre grain and oilseed farm is located on hilly land, so soil and water erosion are keys in their production practices. Lee is very active in the agricultural community. Among other involvements he is currently a Canadian Wheat Board advisor, Western Producers Car Group vice president and Canada Grains Council director. The Ericksons will be invited to the national program later this year held in conjunction with the Canadian Western Agribition. Agribition is November 27 through December 2 in Regina. Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers' program, sponsored by John Deere, began in 1979. It's designed to recognize farm couples between 18 and 40 years of age who exemplify excellence in their profession. Another program goal is promoting agriculture to urban Canadians. For more information, contact Norman Storch, regional chair, in Hanna at (403)854-2593.

4-H Club Week more than meets the eye

The 1994 4-H Club Week theme of "more than meets the eye" encouraged the 120 delegates to look deeper into themselves as well as others, while growing and developing as individuals. Club Week focuses on personal development of its participants. Much of the interaction is through group exploration of issues such as family, peers, self-esteem, Canadian citizenship and friendship. "Club Week always leaves a lasting impression on young 4-Hers," says Arron Madson, 4-H personal development specialist. "The small group setting encourages the establishment of friendships that can last a lifetime." Clubs select senior members, aged 15 to 21, to attend the special week. Members are allowed to attend only once. Sponsors include Alberta Pool, the United Grain Growers, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Alberta Agriculture. For more information, contact Madson in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Hearing roars at PDP'94

A pride of lions congregated at the Battle Lake provincial 4-H centre last month. They weren't an ordinary lion pride, but 13 and 14-year-old 4-Hers at the "people developing people" camp. For six days they lived by the camp theme of "hear me roar at PDP'94". Through recreational and personal development activities they experienced individual growth and development. In small groups they discussed co-operation, leisure wellness and decision making. They also had a family awareness session in keeping with 1994 as International Year of the Family. The program is sponsored by Alberta Pool, United Grain Growers, Husky Oil, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Alberta Agriculture. For more information, contact Marguerite Stark in Airdrie at 948-8510 or Arron Madson in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Heading north, but not to Alaska

More than 20 4-Hers have new insight into northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Two weeks ago, the 21 club members and three chaperons, left Edmonton for points north. The tour is designed to increase their awareness of agricultural diversity in the north says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H programs specialist. "While camping en route to Yellowknife and back, the 4-Hers purchase Alberta products wherever possible, visit agricultural processing and production facilities, and identify Alberta products available in the NWT," she adds. The club members were: Kyle Bruggencate and Sherri Elliot, Coronation; Jimilee Carothers, Endiang; Billie-Dawn Chubb, Bon Accord; Clayton Crowson, Vauxhall; Heather Fawcett, Consort; Wendy Gano, Crossfield; Jodi Giles, Airdrie; Gordon Guitton, Claresholm; Philip Harty, Etzikom; Erin Holmgren, Carnwood; Nyla Kristensen, Dixonville; Jennifer Lawrence, Clandonald; Kathi McCarty, Vegreville; Bernadette McDonald, Stony Plain; Dale McGlynn, and Heather Mitchell, Pincher Creek; Becky Mitchell, Kitscoty; Brad Scheerschmidt, Botha; Colin Tisdale, Red Deer; and, Bryann Tuttle, Evansburg. The chaperons were leaders Susan Hodgetts of Camrose and Neil Stringer of Sunnybrook. Staff chaperon Janet Kerr is acting regional 4-H specialist in Stettler. For more information, contact Stark in Airdrie at 948-8510 or Kerr in Stettler at 742-7548.

AGRI-NEWS

August 15, 1994

Don't hesitate, call your rural development specialist

One of Alberta Agriculture's new rural development specialists has a simple message for the agriculture and food industry – Don't be afraid to call her, or any of her colleagues. There are real people behind the fancy titles.

Many are the same real people, notes Cindy Bishop, who farm families and rural organizations have gone to for information over the last half century. But, changing times have demanded new and more focused specialists in Alberta Agriculture's field staff.

The need for a rural development speciality was identified in a department review in 1993. Just as the former generalist district agriculturist positions have been replaced by a number of speciality positions, district home economists are no longer. The changes are part of department restructuring and a move to specialization.

For the last eight years Bishop had been a district home economist. Like most colleagues in 52 district offices across the province, Bishop switched to her new specialist role in early May. For her, it also meant a move from Barrhead to Leduc.

Her new job's definition is broad. "Basically," explains Bishop, "we'll work with anyone who works to keep agricultural communities viable." However, the rural development specialists work in two specific streams. One is leadership and organizational development. The other is business development. Bishop is swimming in the leadership stream.

"Both are expanded and more focused work in familiar territory," she says. For Bishop, leadership and organizational development applies to individuals and a variety of rural organizations. Now she'll be able to concentrate on more detailed aspects of the subject such as volunteer management, leadership skill development, goal setting and problem solving.

Leadership development also extends to assessing community needs, exploring alternatives and taking actions to help maintain vital and vigorous agricultural communities.

"It's a facilitator role and a support role," she says. "We expect to be involved in community interaction through partnerships, joint ventures and co-operative projects with other agencies, businesses and local organizations."

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The door of opportunity for increased partnership with other groups and individuals in the community has opened wider she adds. "Again, co-operative working relationships aren't something new for district extension staff, there's just a sharper focus on joining forces to provide more to our customers."

On the business development side, specialists will focus on farm business management skills particularly ownership planning and human resource management. Example subjects include strategic planning for the farm business, setting up a home-based business, dealing with employees and developing new agri-food products with rural and farm entrepreneurs.

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Despite their familiarity with these topics and their solid extension skills, Bishop and her rural development colleagues are trail blazers. "We are pioneers. We're using our knowledge and experience to provide a more detailed, high quality information service. We will share our expertise by whatever means best meets our customer needs – consultations, phone calls, seminars, newscolumns or distributing resource material.

"Our roles will differ with the customers we work with and the communities we work in. Flexibility is essential because the key issues and concerns identified in each community will be unique."

Over the next two months Bishop and her 23 colleagues across the province will be promoting their new-focus services. "We don't really see our customers changing," she says. "There will still be a strong association with farm families, rural organizations and agribusinesses. We'll still have an association with the 4-H program, although it's more of a support role in training at the club and district level, rather than administration."

Safety issues, particularly food quality and safety, is another area they'll cover. When it comes to farm safety, Bishop says, "We'll be a spark plug that not only responds to the issues where they arise, but also the spark to look ahead, plan and prepare.

"Our bottom line is meeting customer needs, and we'll be looking to our customers for direction," she adds. "I really see our role as being facilitators. We'll be providing tools to our customers and support as they use them."

Even though the 24 rural development specialists are scattered throughout the province, they are as close as any customer's local Alberta Agriculture district office.

"Accessibility is key to making Alberta Agriculture's restructured, specialized services work for our customers. And most have already discovered that their local office is the first place to go," says Bishop.

Contact: Cindy Bishop
986-8985

How-to price forages yourself

Forage pricing is one of the most common questions of the summer says an Alberta Agriculture marketing specialist.

"Since there isn't a visible price discovery system such as a futures market, setting farm-to-farm prices isn't as easy as looking at daily market prices," says Doug Cornell. "The complexity of pricing forages grows with variables such as the variety of products and harvesting methods.

"So, there's no easy, simple answer at your Alberta Agriculture district office. You'll have to look into the particulars yourself," he adds.

The most common method of pricing forage is to ask around, find comparable prices, adjust for moisture and state of harvest and then try to get the buyer and the seller to agree on a price.

"All commodity prices are discovered this way," notes Cornell.

"When buyer and seller can agree on a price, supply and demand have met and the outcome is price."

However, Cornell says, anyone who wants more specific guidelines to buying and selling forages should consider four general areas when settling on a forage price. They are: the product and its quality; adjusting for moisture content; harvest and delivery procedures; and, price discovery.

"These are guides, but there's still work for you in determining the price," he notes.

Product and quality is partly scientific and partly subjective. Quite often final use determines which is more important. For example, dairy producers are more concerned with the scientific. Feed tests for protein, energy, calcium and phosphorous are more important than the look, smell and feel. On the other hand, the horse industry tends to emphasize the look, smell and feel. The cow-calf industry usually won't pay more than \$50 to \$60 per tonne, unless hay is in short supply. Trucking charges increase prices.

"What it all boils down to is that forage products all have a pecking order based on their end-use," says Cornell. "When you're trying to set a price, it's important you can describe your forage product as above, at or below average quality. Then you can compare to other prices."

Because most people don't like to pay for water, moisture content also affects sale price. "If you have found a price of a comparable product at a different moisture level, there's a way to calculate your price."

For example, you know the price of greenfeed is \$60, but you plan to buy the crop as silage. Say the greenfeed's moisture content is 14 per cent and silage's is 60 per cent. To determine the price of the dry matter, divide the greenfeed price by one minus the greenfeed moisture level. In this case, 60 divided by one minus 0.14 (0.86) which equals \$69.77. For the price of silage, multiply the dry matter price by one minus the silage moisture content. In this case, \$69.77 times one minus 0.6 (0.4) equals \$27.91. **[Formatted formulas follow article.]**

"There is a trap in the formula," Cornell adds. "You need to compare like forages. You won't get a fair reflection by using a baled price for harvested greenfeed to set the price of a standing, unharvested cereal crop. Risk is why you need to look at harvest and delivery. Who takes the risk of not getting the crop harvested?"

Cornell suggests using two Alberta Agriculture priced publications to settle the forage deal. The annual Custom Rates Survey (Agdex 825-9) and Machinery Costs as a Guide to Custom Rates (Agdex 825-4) provide cost figures for cutting, baling, silaging and trucking. "You can use these to adjust your own prices to a comparable basis," he says.

Price discovery relies on the forage's supply and demand as well as that of competing products. "This makes it the toughest area to assess since there are no trading floors or futures contracts to help you make forage price discovery fair and visible," notes Cornell. Nor, is there a standard set of hay grades.

Comparative pricing means looking to auction marts, hay auctions, compression plants and substitute products. "There're

both pros and cons to using these comparisons," he adds. For example, hay sold at auction marts usually goes in small lots of square bales for high prices, while large hay auctions usually overwhelm buyers and prices trail off once demand is satisfied. "These give you guidelines, but maybe not appropriate ones for your forage product."

Cornell suggests other possible guidelines. Southern Alberta feedlots sometimes price barley silage (per ton) at 12 times the bushel price of barley at the pit.

Another method using protein meal prices to set the forage's protein value. While scientific, it isn't a total answer because of variations in energy use and measurement.

Contact: Doug Cornell
948-8536

Moisture adjustment formulas

Step 1

$\frac{\text{Greenfeed price}}{1 - \text{greenfeed moisture level}} = \text{Price of dry matter}$

Step 2

$\text{Price of dry matter} \times (1 - \text{moisture content of silage}) = \text{Price of wet silage}$

These two steps can be combined into a single formula.

$\frac{\text{Greenfeed price} \times (1 - \text{moisture content of silage})}{1 - \text{greenfeed moisture level}} = \text{Price of wet silage}$

Note: This process – either in one or two steps – can be used for other products. For example, hay and haylage.

The 1994 campaign marks the fourth consecutive year Alberta Agriculture, John Deere Limited and the Alberta Women's Institutes have joined forces with rural school children for a farm safety campaign.

"Alberta's rural students have done it again," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program. "Their enthusiasm, creativity and caring has elevated farm safety awareness to another level."

Bonnie Hayden, manager of marketing communications for John Deere agrees. "We're not only delighted with the student response, but believe the four awareness campaigns have been a very effective way of sending out the farm safety message."

First through fourth prizes were awarded in five regions. The 20 first place winners receive John Deere modular toy tractors. There are 25 winners in second and third place categories. Second place awards are John Deere electronic sounds farm sets, with battery-operated John Deere 4WD toy tractors for third. Campaign "I care" T-shirts go to 200 fourth place winners.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng 427-2186
Bonnie Hayden (905)945-7314

John Deere Dealerships – 1994 "I Care" farm safety winner presentations, August 24

Deer Farm Powers Ltd., **Athabasca** – Gary Lachance, 675-2256
Evergreen Implements, **Brooks** – Jerry Martin, 362-3486
Green Power Ltd., **Burdett** – 823-3811; Larry Weatherhead, 223-3588

Agro Equipment, **Calgary** – Bill Quinney, 280-2200
Stettler Farm Equipment, **Coronation** – 578-3744; Doug Torigan, 742-4427

Martin Farm Equipment, **Edmonton** – Merrill Martin, 452-2790
5 Star Equipment, **Fairview** – Jim Backus, 835-4440
Deerland, **Fort Saskatchewan** – Dale Stokke, 998-3249
Peace Farm Power, **Grande Prairie** – Dennis Landis, 532-8402
Hanna Farm Equipment, **Hanna** – Tom Marshall, 854-3334
Deer Country Equipment, **High River** – 652-7797; Bruce Smith, 485-2231

Grainline Implements, **Killam** – Joe Heinrich, 385-3993
McKay Brothers, **Lethbridge** – Allan Fabro, 327-5512
Kelemen & Sons, **Manning** – Bryan Kelemen, 836-3337
Greenline Equipment, **Mayerthorpe** – Gil Greenwood, 786-2253
Greenline Equipment, **Olds** – Harvey Jacobson, 556-6961
Ranch Supply, **Pincher Creek** – Ken Lewis, 627-4451
Deermart Equipment, **Red Deer** – Lorraine Mochoruk, 343-2238
Stettler Farm Equipment, **Stettler** – Gary Fedick or Doug Deaudrop, 742-4427

Green Power, **Taber** – Larry Weatherhead, 223-3588
Guard's Implement, **Trochu** – Jim Guard, 442-3982
Blue Sky's Country, **Vegreville** – Keith Carver, 632-6006
Agland, **Vermilion** – Cam Kay, 853-5361
Deer-Country Equipment, **Vulcan** – Bruce Smith, 485-2231
Martin Farm Equipment, **Warburg** – 848-7777; Merrill Martin, 452-2790
Deerline Sales, **Westlock** – Wayne Peyre or Sandy McFaul, 349-3391

Caring messages rewarded

August 24 will be a special day for 270 rural Alberta elementary school students across the province.

All are prize winners in the 1994 spring farm safety contest and will receive their prizes at presentations across the province at the same time on the same day, 1:30 p.m. on August 24. Prize presentations are at 26 dealerships of the contest's co-sponsor, John Deere Limited. [List of dealerships follows.]

The 1994 awareness campaign and contest asked students to send an "I care" postcard to their favorite farmer. Students created artwork for the front of the postcard and wrote a short safety message on the back.

They sent their postcard in to Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program office to enter the contest. Their postcards were mailed to farmers during National Farm Safety Week July 25 through 31. Twelve of the postcards were used for public service announcements in Alberta during the awareness week.

Rural route smooth road for 4-H judging competition

The 60 competitors at the eighth annual provincial 4-H judging contest probably couldn't tell their host was a rookie says Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H agriculture specialist.

"It was everything you could ask for in the way of co-operation and a smooth running program," says Henry Wiegman of the Olds Agricultural Society. "For a first-time at a new facility, it was great.

"Although I don't think the ag society controlled it, the weather co-operated too," Wiegman adds.

"Considering the fact that most delegates are from rural Alberta, Alberta Treasury Branches (ATB) is proud to sponsor a competition in a rural centre such as Olds," says Larry Hauser, ATB's senior marketing manager. "The quality of youth participating in the program continues to impress and inspire the Alberta Treasury Branches."

When the three-day competition concluded, Tracy Johnston of the Balzac 4-H Beef Club emerged as the highest scoring contestant in the 12 categories. Along the way she won the horse species judging, was second in swine, third in overall placings and fifth in sheep.

For her efforts, Johnston won a trip to the Denver National Western Stock Show next January. The trip is sponsored by the Alberta Canada All Breeds Association (ACABA).

Cale Place of the Nanton beef club finished second overall. He declined a trip award for the opportunity to return to the provincial competition next year.

The remaining top 10 finishers won the right to compete at the international 4-H judging seminar during Agribition'94. The contest runs November 23 through 28 in Regina.

Those eight winners (in order of finish) are: Dana Vos, North 40 Mile, Burdett; Tracy Gardner, Eagle Multi, Olds; Bill Mosley, West Carstairs Beef; Aaron Fehlauer, Calmar Multi, Devon; Tanya Burgess, Cardston Chinook Beef; Allison Fehlauer, Calmar Multi, Devon; John Beasley, John Ware Beef, Patricia; and, Cherie McGowan, Killam Light Horse.

"Three participants won species classes but didn't make the top 10," notes Wiegman. "That's an indication of how strong the competition was."

Becky Mitchell of Kitscoty Beef came the closest to cracking the top 10, she was eleventh overall. She won the swine species judging. Sheldon Nadeau of the Fort Macleod Multi Club won the dairy species judging and Stephen Cholack of the Lamont Beef club, the sheep species judging.

Senior 4-Hers qualify for the provincial contest through district and regional judging events. The provincial competition includes instructional and information clinics. Participants go on to judge 12 livestock competition classes. They judge conformation of dairy cattle, beef cattle, light and heavy horses, swine and sheep. They evaluate the livestock through a combination of written and oral reasons. The competition also includes a recall exam.

The competition's major sponsor is Alberta Treasury Branches. Previous competitions had been held during Edmonton Northlands' Farmfair in November.

For more information about the competition or for more complete contest results, contact Wiegman in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Contact: Henry Wiegman
422-4444/427-2541

Paszkowski responds to wheat agreement with U.S.

Alberta's Minister of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development says he's disappointed Canada accepted export caps on Canadian wheat and durum wheat shipments to the U.S. Interest group pressures in the U.S. led to the export caps says Walter Paszkowski. "I am disappointed that Canada accepted export caps. These problems could have been avoided if the Canadian government had participated in real negotiations with the U.S. prior to the signing of the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on December 15, 1993. Now Canada is trying to negotiate after the fact.

"The problems perceived by the Americans are not the result of unfair Canadian trading practices," he adds. "Rather, the problems are the result of the Americans' own Export Enhancement Program (EEP) and last year's poor quality American crop caused by natural events like the flooding that occurred along the Mississippi."

In the context the agreement avoids a trade war that would have included other commodities, Paszkowski says, "This is likely the best deal we could expect."

The agreement has positive aspects – the one-year duration of the agreement and no other export caps were set for barley, barley malt, wheat flour and semolina. The agreement also allows a blue ribbon panel to develop a permanent solution to the matter. The panel will examine all aspects of grain marketing, subsidies and transportation in both countries.

"The panel needs to take a good, hard look at American and Canadian trading practices. They need to recommend a permanent solution to achieve a truly open North American grains trade area without any artificial restrictions," says Paszkowski. "However, we should not leave that task to the panel alone. I urge the federal government to make the best of this one-year period.

"Alberta has long advocated reform of Canada's transportation and wheat board policies," he adds. "The Americans have now focused their attention on this need for change. Perhaps now all Canadians will realize we cannot delay our own decisions on how Canada's grain marketing, handling and transportation system can become more efficient and competitive.

"For example, the GATT will require early decisions about the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA). We can't afford to wait until the panel reports in May 1995."

The impact of the agreement on Alberta farmers will depend on a number of variables. They include EEP levels, European Community intervention stocks, size of Canadian wheat and durum crops, and world price levels.

Alberta traditionally exports a small percentage, about 15 per cent, of Canada's durum to the U.S.. However, Alberta farmers account for approximately 33 per cent of the rest of Canada's wheat exports to the U.S.

Contact: **Brian Hlus**
(403)427-2137

C. D. Radke
(403)427-2145

July weather June's opposite

In a summer of contradictions, 1994's July brought opposite weather to a cool, wet June in Alberta says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"July was warm and dry across the province," says Peter Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch.

"This warm, dry weather helped crop development in most of Alberta," he says. Heat units ranged from about five to 20 per cent above the July normal. "Unfortunately, dry conditions did reduce yield potential in dryland crops," he adds.

The average temperature was 0.8 degrees above the long-term average for July. July rainfall was 11 per cent below normal. These averages are based on data recorded at 41 Environment Canada climate stations across the province.

"While the provincial precipitation average of 57.5 mm is 6.8 mm above the long-term average, it hides the fact that most of southern Alberta was quite dry, while northern Alberta had above normal rain," says Dzikowski.

Most of southern Alberta received 40 to 80 per cent less rainfall than normal. Rainfall amounts were in the 10 to 20 mm range. There were even greater variations from the norm. Milk River, for example, reported only 5.2 mm of rain, 17 per cent of its long-term normal.

"As well, there was a lot of variability over short distances because of the showery nature of the rain," he adds.

Northern Alberta, specifically in the Peace region, reported above normal rainfall in amounts between 70 and 100 mm. Peace River had the highest total of 115.5 mm.

July's average monthly temperature was 17.5°C. The long-term provincial average is 16.7°C. Most Alberta locations reported temperatures at normal to two degrees above normal. "Really hot weather late in the month offset cool temperatures of early July," he notes.

Contact: **Peter Dzikowski**
422-4385

Natural fibre fest adds to Olde Tyme Sheep Faire'94

Some of wool's natural fibre cousins will share the spotlight at the 1994 Lambs in Lacombe Olde Tyme Sheep Faire September 17.

"The annual Olde Tyme Sheep Faire traditionally offers a variety of lamb, sheep and wool related activities for both people in the sheep industry and the general public," notes Wray Whitmore, Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist.

All of the ninth annual fair's activities are at the Central Alberta Agricultural Society Grounds and the Agriculture Canada research station in Lacombe. Those activities include commercial exhibits, a bench show, a variety of demonstrations from sheep dog handling to sheep-to-shawl, contests and many opportunities to sample lamb.

For the first time, the Western Canadian Natural Fibre Association is holding its festival in conjunction with the fair. Besides the association's annual meeting, the festival includes displays and seminars. Live animal displays will include llamas, alpacas, angora goats and rabbits, and cashmere goats.

"We're pleased the natural fibre festival is part of a day packed with fun and interesting activities," says Edith Williams, chair of the event.

Entry deadlines for the bench show, shepherd competition and photography contest are August 30. For more information, contact Betty Matejka at 783-2167.

Junior and intermediate shepherds can compete in nine different events. They are trimming, market lamb judging, ewe lamb, mature lamb, exhibitor's flock, showmanship, fashion lead, novelty lead and yearling ewe. For more information, contact Norine Whiting in Stavely at 549-2464.

For the second consecutive year, the photo contest offers a \$150 first prize for the best purebred sheep photograph. Second through fifth place also receive cash awards ranging from \$100 down to \$20. The photo can't have people or advertising.

Organizer Geri McNeil says she hopes the prize money attracts as many entries as last year. In 1993 contest entries topped 200, compared to between 25 and 30 total entries in previous years.

The six other photo categories also have cash prizes; \$20 for first, \$10 for second, \$5 for third and a \$75 grand prize for best overall photo. For more information on the photo contest, contact McNeil at 224-3753.

For more information on the Lambs in Lacombe fair, contact Whitmore in Edmonton at 427-5083 or Williams in Ponoka at 784-3511.

Contact: **Wray Whitmore**
427-5083

Edith Williams
784-3511

Agri-News briefs

Leadership in two parts at Kananaskis

Three Alberta 4-Hers have finished the first leg of a two part leadership seminar. Kelly Dixon of Medicine Hat, Laura Malcher of Bashaw and Dana Vos of Burdett spent August 7 through 12 at a youth leadership seminar hosted by Alberta Recreation and Parks. The second part of the seminar runs October 13 through 16, again in Kananaskis country. The seminar's aim is improving its participants' group planning, communication and personal skills to aid their individual leadership skills. Participants come from a wide variety of youth organizations. The three 4-Hers were joined by Bonnie McCrindle, a 4-H leader from Byemore. She was chosen to attend the seminar as part of the 4-H leader development award program. The 4-H members were awarded their trips at the provincial 4-H selections program. Trip awards are based on community and 4-H involvement as well as interpersonal skills. For more information, contact Marguerite Stark in Airdrie at 948-8510; McCrindle at 579-2359; Dixon at 526-1827; Malcher at 372-2371; or, Vos at 833-2190.

Three day stock dog school coming

A limited registration, three-day stock dog school will be held in Battleford, Saskatchewan September 30 through October 2. Time will be equally divided between working with cattle and sheep. The trainer is Dale Montgomery. Participants can bring their own horse. For more information, write Galawater Kennels, Earl and Phyllis Tinney, RR1, Battleford, Saskatchewan, S0M 0E0 or call (306)937-2004.

Native legumes used for reclamation

A four year study has resulted in commercial production of a native legume recommended to reclaim and restore high elevation areas. Alpine milkvetch (*Astragalus alpinus* L) was the study's most highly recommended species to reclaim and restore disturbances on the Eastern Slopes. The plant's seeds were released to Proven Seeds Inc. Commercial production will begin in the spring of 1995. The study partners, the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville and Wild Rose Consulting of Edmonton, collected, evaluated and selected the legume species. Native legumes adapt well in harsh environments and also increase soil nitrogen, an important factor in reclaiming disturbed sites. In 1990 and 1991, 14 indigenous legumes were collected at 41 sites in seven different Alberta foothill and mountain locations between Waterton and Grande Cache. Seeds were cleaned, then planted in nursery plots. Survival, vigor, spread, growth habit, phenology, seed yield and germination data were collected and evaluated at the Vegreville centre. Two other species also performed well. They are late yellow locoweed and showy locoweed. Arctic and other rhizobial strains are now being screened for their potential to improve survival and establishment of selected legumes at reclamation sites. For more information, contact Barb Darroch in Vegreville at (403)632-8209 or Ann Smreciu of Wild Rose at (403)461-5950.

Kamloops Cattlemen'94 site

Cattlemen'94, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association's (CCA) annual conference, runs September 14 through 16 in Kamloops, B.C. The conference theme is the challenges of change. Two challenges conference participants will hear about are international trade and animal health. Canadian beef in Asia and whether GATT is good for cattlemen are on the agenda. Animal health as a trade issue will also be discussed. The annual conference traditionally includes the CANFAX market outlook. The CCA's market information service is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 1994. The anniversary will be celebrated on the evening of September 15. For more information about the conference, contact the CCA office in Calgary at (403)244-4487.

Coming agricultural events notice

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **September or later in 1994, or in 1995?** Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization). **Please include your telephone number:**

Please return this form by August 25, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Communications Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
FAX (403)427-2861

*("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in **Agri-News**.
The next list will be **September 5, 1994**)*

AGRI-NEWS

August 22, 1994

Timeliness advantage from marketing specialists

The job title of marketing specialist has rested on Doug Walkey's shoulders for the last eight years, but the job description changed this spring when Alberta Agriculture restructured its field operations and moved to specialization at the district level.

Regional marketing specialists are no longer. Instead, the province will have seven marketing specialists at district offices scattered throughout the province. Walkey is one of them.

While many former generalists-turned-specialists colleagues have found their work narrowing into specifics, Walkey says his customers now ask broader-based questions than he used to deal with.

Many of those questions are in what he terms an economic realm, such as what futures contract prices are, rather than what a futures contract is. All of the marketing specialists are better able to answer those price questions. Their aid is from satellite technology that hooks them up not only with Winnipeg and Chicago commodity markets, but the world.

"The customer benefits because we can give more up-to-date and complete answers," says Walkey. "We're not dealing with four-day old data. We can say the price of November canola futures 10 minutes ago traded at so much a tonne and that's up or down so much from the previous day."

Since Walkey changed jobs this spring, the ratio of grain and livestock questions has stayed the same. About 70 per cent of his customer calls are related to grains and other field crops. The other 30 per cent is about livestock. Other marketings specialists have different splits, some as wide as 90 to 10.

Walkey, who moved from Red Deer to Lacombe, also finds himself dealing with customers in a much smaller geographic area. As a regional specialist he dealt with queries from Ontario west to the Pacific. The calls came, he says, because of unique courses plus Alberta's leadership in marketing skills training.

Now the bulk of his customers are from an area just north of Camrose south to Olds, although calls have come from the rest of the province.

Boundaries don't apply when customers need information. The seven marketing specialists are available to anyone, anywhere in the province. "The first stop for marketing information is your local

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district office," reminds Walkey. "They'll put you in touch with me or another marketing specialist."

Teaching and facilitating courses are still part of Walkey's job. However, more of the course leadership will come through team teaching. "Some of my colleagues have already established that link with agribusinesses and consultants. I see co-operative partnerships as the way of the future in delivering marketing skills courses," says Walkey.

Although there will be less time for developing marketing tools such as the popular market simulation workshops, marketing specialists still hope to be involved in this role. One new product is slated for testing this winter. The computer program is a market

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

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decision tool that allows producers to run through market strategies and track market opportunities.

As with the other new speciality positions, there is room to grow and build a job profile. "Part of it has to be from the customer, what they want and need," says Walkey. "Our department has a proven track record in providing our customers with marketing how-to and strategies. Marketing education – for lack of a better term – doesn't have the same history as production, for example. There's tradition in learning from a parent and from college and university courses.

"Marketing – really merchandising your crop – is still new in a sense. Futures markets have been around quite awhile, but futures contracts haven't been. Farmers used to go into their local elevator and have a couple of choices in how to sell their crop. Now there are alternatives beyond open basis and deferred contracts.

"And," he adds, "from my point-of-view as a marketing specialist, we need to complete the integration of marketing and production. That means farmers wouldn't start by asking how much could they produce. Instead they'd make production decisions based whether or not they can sell it for a profit."

Contact: Doug Walkey
782-3301

Higher moisture level lessens impact damage

A recent Alberta Agriculture engineering services research project has yielded some interesting results for pulse crop producers looking for ways to lessen impact damage.

Pulse crops are fragile explains processing engineer Kris Chawla. During every stage, from harvesting and cleaning to storage and transportation, the seeds experience free falls. The falls range from a few feet on the farm to over 100 feet in grain terminals. Each fall can mean a quality loss.

"Because pulse production is relatively new here, the industry needs more knowledge about the specific causes of damage as pulse crops are handled," says Chawla. "Our research study is one step in determining some of those specifics. We investigated the extent and causes of damage from free fall."

The study looked at four variables. Researchers used drop heights of 14, 24 and 54 feet. Express peas and small red beans were dropped onto three surfaces – concrete, metal and seeds-on-seeds. Seed moisture was adjusted to three different levels. For beans that was 11.13 per cent, 15.39 per cent and 21.38 per cent. The pea moisture levels were 12.81 per cent, 16.86 per cent and 20.48 per cent. The tests were conducted at temperatures of 22°C and -15°C.

Results suggest that damage is less at warmer temperatures, from lower heights, when seeds are dropped onto seeds and when moisture level is higher.

"In both beans and peas, the total damage decreased significantly as the moisture level increased," he says. "This was more obvious in the case of beans."

What common-sense dictates was also proven true in the research he adds. "Drop height was a significant factor in physical damage. The higher the drop height, the more damage occurred."

As well, damage was less when the seeds were dropped on each other than when they were dropped on concrete or steel.

Temperature was also a factor. Damage was less at room temperature (22°C) than when the tests were done at -15°C. This was especially evident with the peas notes Chawla.

"The average physical damage to peas at room temperature with a 54 foot drop ranged from 1.69 per cent seed-on-seed to 3.58 per cent on concrete," he says. "At -15° the damage increased by 2.89 to 3.5 times. The high was 12.59 per cent damage when the peas landed on concrete to a low of 4.86 per cent seed-on-seed."

For more information on the project, contact Chawla in Edmonton at 427-2181.

Contact: Kris Chawla
427-2181

Solar energy advantage for watering shelterbelts

Combining solar energy and trickle irrigation can be an ideal way to water field shelterbelts says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The combined technologies give you a lot of advantages when you're establishing a field shelterbelt," says Dennis Roll, regional irrigationist in Airdrie.

Basically, the system is a small solar powered pumping unit connected to a trickle irrigation lateral (hose). The lateral's openings deliver the water directly to each tree's root area. Depending on tree spacing, up to a mile of shelterbelt trees can be irrigated at the same time.

"You can really save time and labor," says Roll. "Both add up when you have to manually water each tree. You also use less water this way."

There are also other benefits. Using this system immediately after planting the trees provides enough soil moisture to help the seedling trees survive. This can lessen tree loss and keep replacement costs down.

The system is also ideal for remote locations and requires little attention once it's in place. "The only requirement is ensuring a sufficient water supply to the system," says Roll. If there isn't a natural water supply, water can be trucked to the pump location and stored in a polyethylene tank.

"The costs aren't great either," adds Roll. He estimates setting up a solar powered trickle irrigation system at less than a dollar per tree per year for a mile of trees.

Required equipment includes a solar panel and its associated electronics, a pump, a filter, a 1,200 gallon polyethylene tank and a trickle lateral. "All of these are available commercially," notes Roll.

Contact: Dennis Roll
948-8540

Walking in farmer's shoes through market simulations

Leaders, agribusiness people and others in the agriculture industry are invited to take a walk in their farm customers' shoes this fall through intensive market simulation workshops.

"Our grain and livestock simulations have been popular since they were introduced with both producers and the people they deal with," notes Doug Walkey, an Alberta Agriculture marketing specialist.

"We've found each of those two groups need and expect different things," he adds. "Producers are learning a business skill. Agricultural lenders and the agribusiness community learn more about the challenges their clients face. We emphasize the farmer's point of view, the challenges, the risks and the limitations."

There are three different market simulations workshops – FutureSim, CattleSim and GrainSim. Registration is limited in all three workshops. Walkey advises interested participants to register early to avoid disappointment.

FutureSim is the most basic of the three courses. It's scheduled for September 20 and 21 in Red Deer. The workshop fee is \$93.50 plus GST. The registration deadline is September 9.

Walkey says FutureSim is the skill training course and is recommended as a starting point. "It's a great place to start as it teaches important skills for both grains and livestock marketing." FutureSim covers hedging, dealing with brokers, managing delivery problems and introduces markets and market analysis.

CattleSim runs September 27 through 29 in Calgary. Participants run their own commercial cattle operation during the workshop. They can buy and sell feeder cattle while matching wits with packers and keeping an eye of the profit bottom line.

The CattleSim workshop registration deadline is September 15 and the cost is \$140.25 plus GST.

"The workshop covers marketing strategies that are part of modern cattle marketing," says Walkey. This includes cash contracting, target markets, export, grading issues, hedging and options.

As with CattleSim, GrainSim participants manage their own production. The workshop focus is on market strategies, planning for risks and merchandising farm products.

"GrainSim includes the full range of cash contracts, delivery alternatives, futures and options," notes Walkey. "Participants also look at managing farm debt as it goes hand-in-hand with market analysis."

The GrainSim workshop is scheduled for October 18 through 20 in Edmonton. The registration deadline is September 30 and the cost is also \$140.25 plus GST.

Registration forms for the workshops are available at Alberta Agriculture's 52 district offices. For more information on the workshops, contact Walkey in Lacombe at 782-3301, Doug Cornell in Airdrie at 948-8536 or Lee Melvill in Brooks at 362-1212.

Contact: Doug Walkey
782-3301

Cropping up with family and scarecrows

Blue potatoes, exploding seed pods, scented herbs and bright flowers are among the features of the 1994 Crops of Alberta open house August 26 and 27.

The annual display has a family flavor in 1994 in recognition of International Year of the Family says co-ordinator Camille Ducharme. "Crops of Alberta has always featured the diversity of crops grown by the province's farmers from traditional field crops to newer ventures such as herbs.

"This year's 'for kid's sake' theme puts an emphasis on colors, shapes and smells. During tours we'll show results of interesting experiments such as purple beans that turn dark green when they're cooked," she adds.

Colors in the display include the bright scarlet of a dried flower called celosia, purple alfalfa blooms and the gold of ripening grain. Earlier in the season, blue flax blooms surrounded the plot area. There's also color in the display's theme flower bed. White alyssum and red petunias were used to create the International Year of the Family logo.

Popular and common herbs such as sage and thyme are joined by lemon basil and apricot scented geraniums to entice the nose. Shapes range from four-foot high barley stands and stretching sunflowers, to the spread of pumpkin plants and the unfamiliar outlines of green pepper plants.

Tours during the two-day open house run at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. "That's standard for the open house, but there are changes," notes Ducharme. One is that the two days are a Friday and a Saturday. Previously, the open house ran only on weekdays. "We hope to attract more families this way because more parents should be able to come with their children," she says.

As well, guided tours will also be available in French. The bilingual Ducharme also offers French tours throughout the Crops of Alberta season.

Coming to the crops display this year has a few extras because of its theme. One is the scarecrow family that's been keeping watch in the display since early summer. Another, a small tepee

covered by a climbing wild cucumber plant, is just the right size for young visitors.

While the open house features the tours at regular times, the Crops of Alberta display is open to the public throughout the growing season from May through September.

You don't need a guide. Signs beside each of the 170 plots identify the plant, its variety and growing season.

"Self-guided tours are easy, but you can arrange a special individual or group tour by calling me," says Ducharme. She can be reached in Edmonton at 427-2530.

The annual one-acre Crops of Alberta display has been a joint project of Alberta Agriculture's soil and crop management branch and the University of Alberta's plant science department since 1985. It's located immediately south of the J.G. O'Donoghue building, Alberta Agriculture's headquarters, part of the Neil Crawford Centre in Edmonton. The address is 7000-113 Street.

Adjacent to the Crops of Alberta display is a permanent composting display. It features 11 different composting models.

Contact: Camille Ducharme Denise Maurice
427-2530 427-2530

Agri-News briefs

Nominations open for Poultry Serviceman's Award

September 2 is the submission deadline for Alberta Poultry Serviceman Award nominations. The annual award recognizes outstanding individual service to the province's poultry industry. That includes developing technology, providing continuing information or undertaking research. The nominee's work must have resulted in benefit for the Alberta industry, however, the individual doesn't have to be from Alberta. Contributions don't have to be from the current year and awards may be granted posthumously. Nomination forms were included with the July 1994 **Eggnotes**, the provincial egg producers' newsletter. Nominations must include the name, address and telephone number of the nominee, a detailed description of how the individual has contributed to the industry and the name and address of the nominator. The award is presented at the annual Poultry Servicemen's Workshop. Submit nominations to Rod Chernos, Alberta Agriculture, Bag Service #1, Airdrie, Alberta, T4B 2C1.

Farmfair livestock entries close September 9

Beef cattle, sheep and swine entries for Farmfair'94 show competitions close on September 9. The annual Edmonton Northlands event runs November 5 through 13. Prize list and entry forms are available from Northlands agricultural department. Write Box 1480, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2N5, call (403)471-7260 or fax (403)471-8176.

New national designation of beef cuts

The Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) and the Canadian Meat Council (CMC) have joined forces for a major food-handling breakthrough. They will create a national designation for each cut of beef sold in grocery stores. "The advantages in purchasing, packaging and transportation will result in efficiencies for the industry, while the certainty of meat cuts, which would not vary, will be a consumer's dream come true," says John Geci, CCGD president and chief executive officer. "The solution lay in our taking advantage of the electronic age! Portions of meat will eventually be as standardized as currently packaged groceries," says Robert Weaver, CMC general manager. "Shoppers will be assured of a 'nice' cut every time," he adds. Other key aspects of the agreement include smaller portion size in tune with current eating habits and improved trim levels with more waste material removed during processing. This standardization means wholesale buyers and sellers will no longer have to negotiate trim levels. CCGD members represent approximately 85 per cent of Canadian grocery distribution. CMC represents federally inspected meat processing firms. For more information, contact Max Roytenberg of the CCGD in Toronto at (416)971-5041, or Larry Campbell of the CMC in Toronto at (416)239-8411.

Video aids crop diagnoses

A 10-minute Alberta Agriculture video can help you diagnose crop problems. "Outstanding in your Field: Diagnosing Crop Problems" (114 VT) is available for loan from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. The video goes through the diagnostic steps in finding, identifying and treating a crop or soil problem. For more information on this video, contact the Multi-Media Library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

AGRI-NEWS

August 29, 1994

You can go home, but things do change

When Emile deMilliano returned to Alberta Agriculture's Lamont district office this spring with a new job as crops specialist, it was a homecoming of sorts.

A dozen years ago the Calmar native joined Alberta Agriculture as a district agriculturist. He spent the 1980s as Lamont's district agriculturist. After a secondment in the department's marketing division, he returned to the area, Fort Saskatchewan, and the same generalist job. All that changed this May as the department restructured its field offices and moved to specialist positions in the 52 district offices.

Some of deMilliano's colleagues also started their new job with the same advantage – familiar territory. He knows the farmers, the agricultural service boards, the commodity organizations, and they know him. This advantage though, he says, can be a mixed blessing.

"It's harder for the customer who has worked with me in the past who now comes in with a livestock or marketing question, and I refer them to someone else. At first that's confusing, and difficult, on both sides of the counter.

"No inquiry is turned away," he's quick to add. "In-depth, specific questions out of my speciality will be referred. It's not that I don't want to handle the question, but I believe the appropriate specialist can provide a higher level of expertise based on their knowledge, training and experience.

"The system is working well – even though it's only been in place a few months," he adds. "Our customers have learned that their local district office is the access point; the door to all 52 of the district offices as well as the rest of the department and other sources of expertise."

Another advantage of the new specialist positions is an ability to focus on specifics, rather than a broad range of agricultural knowledge. In deMilliano's case, he concentrates on crop production, and in particular pulse production. This is what he calls the proactive aspect of his new role as a specialist.

"I can see I'll be more involved with the pulse commission in a number of ways and at a number of levels," says deMilliano. Zone two and zone three of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission are both in the Lamont vicinity.

"District staff already have a track record at both the zone and provincial level with the pulse commission," he adds. "We'll be able to expand on that."

Applying knowledge and technology to local conditions is another element of the specialist's role. "That's one thing our customers asked for – more localized information. And we'll be able to provide that because our job is specific. In my case, crops rather than livestock," he notes. There are increased opportunities for research trials, field days and other projects specific to the local area.

At least one of deMilliano's former and future customers thinks the move to specialization will be beneficial. Gordon Tuck, who

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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chairs the pulse commission's zone two, says he finds the change from generalists to specialists exciting. He says he felt for district agriculturists who had so much to cover. Many times their role was facilitating, or passing their customer on to someone with more indepth knowledge.

With increased specialization, Tuck says the specific specialist will be able to offer customers more. More, he says, because of how focused specialists will be in a particular area, plus the ability to concentrate on local concerns.

These advantages outweigh the extra travelling distance. He lives 17 miles away from Vegreville and 50 miles from Lamont. However, access is easy through the Government RITE line he adds.

Recently Tuck worked with another crop specialist with a focus in pulses, Kirsty Piquette who is based in St. Paul. She and deMilliano are involved with a zone pulse harvest publication. Piquette was also who Tuck called with queries when deMilliano was away from his office.

"That shows how accessible our services still are," says deMilliano. "Your local district office is the first stop, but our customers are a phone call away from any one of our specialists anywhere in the province."

Contact: Emile deMilliano
895-2219

Paszkowski calls for exposing U.S. subsidies

Canadian authorities and grain industry leaders should seize every opportunity to expose U.S. subsidy practices that affect our market share and producer returns says Walter Paszkowski, Minister of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

"This is one way we can pressure the U.S. to use some restraint in using its Export Enhancement Program (EEP)," says Paszkowski. "It's also a way to demonstrate Canada isn't the problem that vested interests made it out to be in the U.S. and world media during the weeks before our wheat exports were capped."

The minister's call to action was in response to the U.S. government using the EEP to sell large quantities of wheat to China and Algeria, only days after an agreement limiting Canadian wheat exports to the U.S. was reached.

"Those sales clearly demonstrate a lack of U.S. appreciation for the economic logic of Canadian wheat exports into the U.S. market," he says.

Canada has consistently emphasized – and, almost all industry analysts had recognized – subsidized U.S. exports were the major factor, apart from shortages due to flooding, for increased Canadian exports of durum and other wheat to the U.S. during the past crop year.

"The recent U.S. sales to traditional Canadian markets, with continued use of the EEP at levels that the market clearly doesn't

signal, demonstrates stubborn wilfulness as well as a lack of recognition of our two-way relationship," stresses Paszkowski.

He denounces the U.S. action as not in keeping with trade policy in the 1990s. "Yielding solely to domestic protectionist pressures is no way to conduct international trade policy in the mid-1990s, especially following the new global GATT agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement," he says.

Paszkowski says he expected disciplined use of U.S. export subsidies after the long and detailed bilateral discussions between Canadian and U.S. officials. "Those discussions should have had some impact on U.S. actions, particularly restraint, since subsidized U.S. sales affect volume and price of Canadian wheat into our traditional markets."

The minister also expresses hope the blue ribbon committee charged with recommending a permanent solution to grain trade between Canada and the U.S. will lay bare each countries' trade policies' problems and effects at home and abroad. "I sincerely hope that the committee can take a hard, unbiased, apolitical look at all practices in both countries' grain trade. Then, each country should be made responsible for necessary changes to remedy the situation."

The committee has a year to examine all aspects of grain marketing, subsidies and transportation in each country. "We must take advantage of this year to make changes that will enhance our competitiveness and our ability to market grain more effectively in a changing global environment," says Paszkowski. "It's absolutely essential that the committee comes up with an action plan that will bring the entire grain trade – durum wheat, other wheats, coarse grains and related products – to a true free trade framework within North America.

"We don't need a so-called 'fair trade' perspective that suits any one government's political needs of the moment," he concludes.

Contact: C.D. (Doug) Radke
(403)427-2145

Agricultural trade mission to Asia a success

Walter Paszkowski calls his recent Asian trade mission "a tremendous success."

Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister, travelled to Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and China to reinforce existing ties between Alberta's agri-food exporters and their Asian markets, as well as to create new markets. During the mission, Paszkowski also promoted the advantages establishing operations in Alberta would present to Asian food companies.

"We had an opportunity to meet with many of the major investors of the world. As a result of those meetings, at least 12 international trade missions will visit Alberta to further discuss opportunities in agricultural production, processing and exporting," he says. "Deals were signed, and other deals will be signed shortly."

Paszkowski met with key retailers, distributors and importers throughout Japan. In Tokyo Paszkowski met with key players in the canola sector, such as the Japan Oil Seed Processors Association, as well as with representatives of the pork and beef sectors. Each of these three sectors are important to Alberta and represent millions of dollars worth of business in the Japanese market.

In Taiwan Paszkowski took part in two media conferences hosted by well-known Taiwanese companies that are launching Canadian canola oil products into their marketplace.

He also met with officials to discuss pork technical exchange missions so that Alberta can learn about Taiwan's technically advanced pork production operations. Alberta also hopes to attract potential Taiwanese investment in a variety of areas related to the agri-food sector.

In Hong Kong Paszkowski met with representatives of large retail chains. One is active throughout Asia, including Japan, China and Hong Kong.

As a result of the meeting, company representatives will travel to Alberta to discuss introducing Alberta Made products to more Asian grocery store shelves. Such a partnership with Alberta suppliers could mean significant exports for Alberta agri-food products.

Also in Hong Kong, Paszkowski received an interim report about the potential for Alberta beef, pork and chicken in the local market as well as southern China.

In China Paszkowski met with officials of Alberta's sister province, Heilongjiang. They discussed a strategic plan to partner Alberta companies with Heilongjiang enterprises in animal genetics and food processing.

Paszkowski says part of the success of the mission was good timing. "The economy of the Asian sector of the world is growing at an all-time rate," he says. "And they are demanding the high-quality, healthy, safe food products that we produce in Alberta.

"However, traditional Canadian agri-food marketing structures will have great difficulty helping industry achieve these opportunities. A review and retooling is fundamentally important to our future success in competing with U.S., Australian, New Zealand and South American industries.

Contact: *Dwight Dibben*
(403) 427-2137
John Cotton
(403) 427-4241

Barry Mehr
(403) 427-2442

CAESA Soil Inventory Project builds database

Vehicles with a Soil Inventory Project sign will be a common sight throughout rural Alberta for the next three summers.

People in those trucks will cover 255,000 square kilometres on a quest to standardize how soil information is gathered from

Alberta's agricultural areas says an Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist.

The project's aim is not just standardizing soil information, but developing a computerized database to support agricultural and environmental planning and management in Alberta's agricultural areas explains Leon Marciak. The project is funded by the Alberta Research Council and the Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainability Agriculture agreement (CAESA). The distinctive CAESA logo will also be on project signs.

"The project's goal will be easy-to-use and easily accessible soil information for producers," adds Marciak. "It will also aid others who need information about chemical and physical properties of the soil resource."

The project database will have more up-to-date information on Alberta's soils. The current soil survey program dates back to 1921. Over the last 70 plus years, small blocks and municipalities were mapped. But, the soils information is in many formats and in some cases use different soil classes than are currently used.

It's expected the database will be available through the planned Alberta Soils Information Centre. Tenders for a private operator of the centre are open until September 15.

SLRI Consultants is the inventory project leader. As well as field work, the company is co-ordinating the project with private sector consultants throughout the province. Work is underway in the Peace River (Peace River - Grande Prairie), northeast (Wainwright - Vermilion) and southeast (Medicine Hat) regions.

For more information about the Soil Inventory Project, contact Marciak in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: *Leon Marciak*
422-4385

Alberta Breeds for the World showcase at the Masters

Alberta leads all other Canadian provinces in both the number of horses and horse-related activities, so it's not surprising Alberta horse breeders are showcased as part of the international celebration of the horse at Spruce Meadows' Masters.

"The prestigious Masters show jumping events at Spruce Meadows are only one element of a very complete celebration of the horse," says Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist. The Masters and associated events run September 7 through 11.

"The entire Equi-Fair, with its international trade show plus the showcase of Alberta horse breeds, is five days packed with entertainment and information," he adds.

Alberta Breeds for the World is celebrating its 11th anniversary in 1994. Heavy horses are in the spotlight this year. The showcase includes four, six and eight horse hitch teams.

"If you're shopping for a horse this gives you the rare opportunity to look at many breeds at the same place. You can see and also learn more about what you want in a horse," says Coleman.

The Masters includes international renowned show jumping, an international trade show, the AGT Battle of the Breeds contest, the Festival of Nations food and entertainment, and a Mexican art exhibition.

Spruce Meadows is located one kilometre south of Calgary city limits on Highway 2 and then two kilometres west on Highway 22X.

For more information about Alberta Breeds for the World, contact Les Burwash in Airdrie at 948-8532, or Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906. For more information on Equi-Fair or the Masters, call Spruce Meadows at 974-4200.

Contact: *Bob Coleman* *Les Burwash*
427-8906 948-8532

Equi-Fair celebrates a dozen years at the Masters

North America's largest international horse industry trade fair is celebrating its 12th anniversary at Spruce Meadows' Masters September 7 through 11.

Equi-Fair offers a unique mix of horse-related products and services from 200 manufacturers, distributors and retailers says Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist. "You can check out custom made saddles and chaps, see the latest in horse health care, meet an artist who can do a portrait of your horse and find out about horse-riding vacations as close as the Rockies or as far away as Puerto Rico."

The companies are from Canada, the U.S. and abroad. There is a designated USA Pavilion. Other representatives are from New Zealand and Germany. Mamaku Sporthorse Stud from New Zealand is one of those exhibitors and has returned to Equi-Fair to promote its breeding stock. European-made products include arena harrows, free running walking machines and jumps.

Education is another element of Equi-Fair. Its veterinary seminar is in its seventh year. This year's sessions feature Mimi Porter of Lexington, Kentucky and Bruce Grahn from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon. Porter is a specialist in physical therapy for equine sports injuries. Grahn is a equine ophthalmology specialist. They'll speak to a select group of veterinarians on Thursday and Friday, September 8 and 9.

The other feature of Equi-Fair is the Alberta Breeds for the World showcase. The very best of 15 breeds are in the spotlight. The feature breed is the heavy horse.

"This is the 11th consecutive year that Alberta's best horses are being showcased at Spruce Meadow's Equi-Fair," notes Coleman. "It's a exceptional way to learn more about the different breeds as you see them in ongoing exhibits as well as in demonstrations of their distinctive talents.

"It's also a great way to learn more about different breeds if you plan on buying a horse, and even just to learn about the variety of horses here in Alberta," says Coleman.

Breeds are also on display throughout the two-day AGT Battle of the Breeds event. Teams of four horse/rider combinations compete in a series of five events – ranging from barrel racing to jeopardy jumping – to determine the most versatile breed of Alberta horse.

"This is a crowd favorite event," notes Coleman. "It's a fun and friendly contest among the dozen or so breed teams who compete each year."

The premiere attraction of the Masters is international show jumping. Competitions run in three rings – Meadows on the Green, All Canada and International. The most prestigious show jumping events of the tournament are the Nation's Cup and the International on the final two days of the Masters.

Echoing the international flavor of competitors from 15 nations is the Festival of Nations. International exhibits, food and entertainment are featured. September 10 is Holland Day. September 11 is British Day.

Another annual feature is an art exhibit at the Gallery on the Green. This year's spotlight is again on Mexico Artesana. Considered one of the most valuable art collections from that country, the travelling exhibit has 117 pieces of competition winning art.

"All five days has something for everyone," says Coleman. "It's inexpensive to attend – gate admission covers all the events – a world class facility and events right here in Alberta."

Spruce Meadows is located one kilometre south of Calgary city limits on Highway 2 and then two kilometres west of Highway 22X.

For more information about Alberta Breeds for the World, contact Les Burwash in Airdrie at 948-8532, or Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906. For more information on Equi-Fair contact co-ordinator Sharon McLennan at Spruce Meadows at 974-4200.

Contact: *Bob Coleman* *Les Burwash*
427-8906 948-8532

Breeds battle for versatility title

A heavy horse cutting close corners in a barrel race and a thoroughbred on a trail ride are unusual, except at the annual AGT Battle of the Breeds competition at Spruce Meadow's Masters.

The prestigious international Masters show jumping tournament is one part of a large celebration devoted to the horse. It runs September 7 through 11 at Spruce Meadows just south of Calgary city limits. The breeds battle is held during the final two days of the event.

"This competition was added five years ago as a friendly contest to answer a provoking question in the horse industry – just which

breed is really the most versatile," says Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist.

About 15 different breeds are scheduled to compete in five different events. Each event is designed to test the strength, ability, intelligence, speed and mobility of the horse. Those events include barrel racing, trail riding, compulsory skills, obstacle driving and jeopardy jumping. A total of \$33,000 in prize money is available.

"The result is entertaining and has been extremely popular with the crowd over the years," says Coleman. "The breed teams are challenged, but also have a lot of fun."

Past winners have been Arabian, Appaloosa and Paint teams. The crowd favorite is usually a heavy horse team. "Heavy horses are the feature breed of the Alberta Breeds for the World showcase, so heavy horse enthusiasts will have more to look forward to in 1994," he says.

The Masters also includes the international trade show Equi-Fair, Festival of Nations food and entertainment, and a Mexican art exhibition.

Spruce Meadows is located one kilometre south of Calgary city limits and two kilometre west on Highway 22X.

Contact: Bob Coleman Les Burwash
 427-8906 948-8532

"This means a standardization for the breeders. They can advertise their horse as meeting one of this ratings and customers will have a good picture of what they mean," says Coleman.

The program runs consecutive September weekends in Red Deer at the Westerner grounds. The first weekend is September 17 and 18, with the 24 and 25 the dates the next week.

A total of 10 breeds will be evaluated. They are Quarter Horse, Appaloosa, Paint, Pinto, Arabian, Morgan, American Saddlebred, Sport Horse, Welsh Pony and Cob, and Walking Horse.

Evaluators include an equine veterinarian and an experienced horse show judge. They score each horse on conformation and performance. Conformation includes front limbs, hind limbs, head, neck, body and balance, movement and type. Performance patterns test athletic ability, temperament and training potential.

For more information, contact Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906 or Les Burwash in Airdrie at 948-8532.

Contact: Bob Coleman Les Burwash
 427-8906 948-8532

Horse Improvement Program evaluation changes

Alberta horse breeders can expect longer days at the annual Horse Improvement Program evaluations next month, but they'll be rewarded with clearer evaluations and could achieve *classic* and *premium* bred designation standards says Alberta Agriculture's provincial horse specialist.

The Horse Improvement Program (HIP) was developed 20 years ago to identify superior horses, breeders and trainers. Each horse is evaluated against a breed standard.

In previous years the breeder received individual evaluation forms from each evaluator. "This year we're doing something different," says Bob Coleman. "Evaluations will be a consensus from the three individual evaluators.

"While this takes a bit longer, the result is a much clearer, complete overall evaluation of each horse. We tried out the system last month with heavy horses and the feedback was positive," he adds.

There's also another feature to the program in 1994. Based on evaluation scores, horses can be classified as Classic Alberta Bred or Premium Alberta Bred. The classic rating is for a horse that scores over 75 points and under 85. Horses receiving 85 or more points qualify for the higher premium designation.

Horses can achieve Supreme Alberta Bred status if they are classified as classic or premium as a yearling or two-year old, or have a premium classification in performance as a two-year old.



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Agri-News briefs

Lean turkey on your barbecue

If you're tired of standard picnic fare, the Alberta Turkey Growers Marketing Board has a solution: lean on turkey. Turkey is versatile and available in many more ways than the traditional whole bird of holiday times. Turkey parts are available fresh or chilled, year round. Those include fillets, breasts, drumsticks, wings and ground for the inevitable burger. And for the novice turkey barbecuer, the marketing board has help. One tip is to pre-cook turkey wings before you barbecue them. This can be done by simmering them in water, or microwaving. There's also a new recipe brochure, "Quick and Easy Summertime Recipes". It's available free by writing the Alberta Turkey Growers Marketing Board, 8711A-50 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6B 1E7. The board also has another new publication, "Alberta Turkeys from Producer to Consumer". Both are also available by writing Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Prairie West Hort trade show nearly sold out

The Prairies' largest horticultural trade show is almost sold out. Only a handful of the 180 spots remain for the November 3 and 4 Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show. The trade show is a joint venture between Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association (LANTA) and the Alberta Horticultural Congress. Both organizers also hold their annual educational programs and social events at the same time. All activities are at the Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre in Edmonton. Trade show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. For more information on the trade show, call Judith Grant at (403)489-1991 or fax her at (403)444-2152.

Sport Horse association holding fall inspections

Lethbridge, Camrose and Calgary are the planned locations for the Canadian Sport Horse Association's (Alberta division) annual fall inspections. Approved horses are issued a Certificate of Identification and recorded in the Canadian Sport Horse Stud Book by the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation. To ensure uniform quality, the association inspects all stallions, all appendix mares and first generation females before they can be licensed for breeding purposes. Currently the association has over 27,500 registered horses and an annual membership of about 1,000. The Canadian Sport Horse's history goes back to crossing Canadian draft mares with imported British Thoroughbred stallions. More warmblood and Thoroughbred blood has been added to produce a uniquely North American performance horse of superior quality. Along with fall inspections, the Alberta division of the association offers futurities. A foal futurity, open to full and half-bred Canadian Sport Horses, runs September 25 in Red Deer in conjunction with the provincial Horse Improvement Program. A yearling conformation and three and four-year-old performance futurity is part of the third annual fall classic horse show in Okotoks. The show is October 8. Application forms for the fall inspections are available by calling Theresa Rogers in Okotoks at (403)938-5436. For more information about the breed, also contact Rogers or either Alberta director. They are Alan Wedge at (403)246-3710 or Peter Walter at (403)259-6684.

Forage secrets let out

A 14-minute video will let you in on how to improve your forage crop productivity through better management practices. In the Alberta Agriculture produced video, John, a successful grower, meets Jack. Jack's forage crops always fail and he doesn't change how he grows those crops. The "Forage Secrets" (125 VT) video is available for loan from any of Alberta Agriculture's 52 district offices. It can also be borrowed by writing the Multi-Media Library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

AGRI-NEWS

September 5, 1994

Publication explains cow leasing options

If you dream of expanding your beef cow herd but you don't want to get a loan, your dream can become reality by leasing cows says an Alberta Agriculture farm economist.

"Leasing is an option that works for more than expansion," says Lorne Erickson of the farm business management branch in Olds. "It can help someone start a herd. Or, it's a way for cow owners to cut back on their daily responsibilities without selling their herd."

All the considerations and variables in cow leasing arrangements are outlined in a new Alberta Agriculture publication. Erickson is one of the authors of **Negotiating Cow Lease Arrangements**. The booklet is \$5 (plus GST) at any Alberta Agriculture district office. A supplementary computer program on disk is also available. Both can also be ordered. [See end of story for more details.]

As well, 10 seminars about cow leasing will be offered throughout Alberta between mid-November and mid-March. More information will be available from Alberta Agriculture district offices when dates and locations are confirmed.

Lease agreements have advantages and disadvantages for both the herd owner and the renter. For example, leasing out a herd and culling a few cows each year may provide some tax savings for the owner. For the renter, leasing may be a way to quickly diversify into beef cattle, use surplus feed or access genetics of an established herd.

"The biggest disadvantage on both sides," he warns, "is not understanding the legal, financial and operational implications of the lease. However, cow-calf leasing arrangements can be profitable and rewarding – for both sides – if the lease is carefully planned."

One necessity in planning is communication. "Objectives and expectations, again both of the owner and renter-operator, should be clear from the start," says Erickson, "That will minimize any future misunderstandings."

The first rule is to create an equitable lease, or a balanced approach to sharing risks and income. Whether a cow owner or a potential cow renter, first assess the risks, returns and opportunity costs. Cow-calf producers face two types of risk – production and marketing. Eventual returns are related to how much risk each

side takes on. Finally, consider opportunity cost, or the income you'd expect from alternative investments with a similar level of risk.

Then, comes a decision about the type of lease. There are four types notes Erickson. "Each distribute risk and return differently, so are suited to different situations," he explains.

A simple cash lease is one option. It has the lowest risk for the owner and greatest risk for the operator.

Leases can also be based on a fixed number of calves. The owner receives a pre-set number of calves as rent.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

In a percentage share lease, owner and renter agree to divide sale revenues, or calves, according to the contribution each makes to caring for the herd. Both sides are exposed to market and production risk.

A flexible share lease allows the renter-operator to recover direct costs such as feed and veterinary costs first, even if market revenue is low. "This means the renter gets paid those costs first and then the other revenue is split with the owner," he says.

Lease design depends on the situation and preferences of the owner and the potential renter. Each beef herd is also unique. "Those are things you need to think over. Also, remember to use your own cost figures when you're assessing a lease. Those costs should include direct, fixed and opportunity costs. Plus, consider management issues such as breeding and herd health," recommends Erickson.

Finally, tax implications are important. Erickson's advice is to talk to a professional before signing an agreement.

Booklets and the disk are each \$5.35, or both for \$10.70 (includes GST), at any of Alberta Agriculture's 52 district offices.

If ordered by mail, the booklet and the disk are \$12.84 including shipping and GST. If you want just the booklet, the cost is \$7.49 (includes shipping and GST). Orders, with cheques made payable to the Provincial Treasurer, can be sent to the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

"The disk isn't a stand alone product," notes Erickson, "But was designed to supplement the booklet. The computer program makes it easier to work with the booklet's worksheets so you can try out many scenarios with different variables more quickly."

Contact: Lorne Erickson
556-4240

Food safety assured through vigilant testing

Food testing statistics show Canadians enjoy one of the safest food supplies in the world says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Canadians have little to worry about when it comes to the safety of their food supply, particularly with Agriculture Canada's testing history, its increased testing and its strict requirements," says Ross Gould, senior manager of the cattle and sheep group.

"Results from food sampling in 1992-93 show that we Canadians have one of the safest food supplies in the world," he adds.

Agriculture Canada has tested and monitored food for bacteria and food additives for more than 30 years. Residue testing and monitoring was added 23 years ago. As well, testing levels have increased dramatically in the last decade in response to both the Canadian public and the people who provide our food supply.

"The increase is a very dramatic 2,260 per cent since 1984-85," notes Gould. In 1984-85 just over 13,000 samples were tested. In 1992-93 over 300,000 samples were tested.

"The results from 1992-93 testing are just as impressive," he adds. In 1992-93, 99.33 per cent of Canadian food samples and 98.56 per cent of imported food samples were below the maximum residue levels set to ensure safety. As well, 84.5 per cent of samples from Canadian sources had no detectable residues at all. Some 73.5 per cent of imported food samples were residue free.

"People shouldn't be overly alarmed or overestimate the actual risks from these numbers," says Gould. "You must remember that maximum residue levels (MRL) are **100 to 1,000 times below the amounts which show effects of any kind in laboratory studies.**" Those laboratory studies include thorough tests for cancer, birth defects, fertility and other health related effects.

MRL is the maximum amount of a chemical that may be present in food. It's a legal limit set by the federal government's Bureau of Chemical Safety. MRLs are expressed as parts per million, billion and sometimes quadrillion. While measurable, they are hard to visualize. For example, one part per billion is equal to one second in 32 years.

MRLs are also based on the assumption that any level below the amount will be safe for daily consumption over a person's lifetime. "Over 99 per cent of our foods are below these levels, so none of us will ever be exposed to more than a tiny fraction of the safe MRL," says Gould. "In other words, the dose makes the poison."

For example, a human would have to eat over 100,000 kg of meat per day from an animal treated with a common growth promotant in order to consume the **minimum** dose to have a measured metabolic effect.

Another factor to keep in mind when analyzing food safety concerns is specific to meat testing. Most meat samples are taken from foods suspected of containing residues. "Despite a growing number of cattle, there was a 35 per cent reduction in the number of suspect carcasses. To my mind, that means producers are doing their part to ensure they don't market cattle that will have an antibiotic residue," he says. **[See related story this issue specifically on beef residue testing.]**

Contact: Ross Gould
427-5083

Team safety – Beef producers and the testing process

There are more beef carcasses to test and more tests being done, but Agriculture Canada food testers have found less suspect carcasses says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The results of 1992-93 agri-food safety testing on beef are encouraging for everyone from the producer through to the consumer," says Ross Gould, senior manager of the cattle and sheep group. "The risk of eating beef containing residues is very low."

Beef carcasses are tested for antibiotic residues, other medications, pesticides, and hormones and growth promotants. Random samples are taken. So are samples from suspect carcasses identified by federal inspectors.

No antibiotic residue was found in 99.3 per cent of the over 5,200 suspect beef carcasses during 1992-93. Nor was antibiotic residues found in 97.7 per cent of the kidney samples from those carcasses. The kidney is the most likely place for residues to be found.

"One of the biggest assurances for consumers should be that all carcasses with antibiotic residues are condemned," notes Gould. "Plus, the number of suspect carcasses are decreasing."

The total number of suspect carcasses containing antibiotics are down by 60 per cent in meat samples and 51 per cent for kidney samples compared with 1987-88. The number of suspect carcasses also declined by 35 per cent over the same five year period.

All beef carcasses were free of other medications including antimicrobials, sulfonamides and nitrofurans. As well, all were free of ivermectin and other pesticides. All carcasses were also tested at below the maximum residue level (MRL) for hormones and growth promotants.

"This is evidence that the people who raise cattle in this country – cow/calf operators, cattle feeders and dairy farmers – are taking increasing care to produce residue-free beef," says Gould.

"Consumers shouldn't be overly concerned with producers using antibiotics and other medications," he adds. The Council of Agricultural Science and Technology reported using antibiotics on food animals may improve human health by decreasing the number of diseased animals and reducing the transfer of disease organisms to humans.

"Obviously, from the testing results, by far the vast majority of producers follow the strict withdrawal times set between using medications and when the animal is slaughtered," he says.

Contact: Ross Gould
427-5083

Sluggish clean up could bring on slugs

Fall clean up around your yard is one way to control slugs says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Part of controlling slugs is to reduce the amount of slug habitat in your yard," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

"So, you can start as you do fall clean-up around your yard because slugs can not only overwinter as eggs or adults in the soil, but also under boards and other debris," she adds.

This means removing boards, bricks and debris on the ground. Mulches and compost piles can also be a slug hiding spot.

Slugs, a type of mollusk, are greyish, grey-brown or almost black snails without a shell. Their color depends on the species and age of the animal. They can be between three and five cm long.

They feed on low growing vegetables and fruits leaving large, ragged holes on plants as well as a shiny trail of slime on leaves, sidewalks and soil. Strawberries, lettuce, cabbage and ripe tomatoes are some of their favorite foods.

Because they are susceptible to dehydration, they hide during the heat of the day in moist, dark places such as under a board. They feed at night and are most active two hours after sunset to two hours before sunrise. They forage in a relatively small area and usually return to the same spot to hide during the day. However, they can venture a distance of three blocks during an evening.

"If you want to control slugs before or during clean-up, there are a number of ways to deal with this garden pest," notes Barkley.

Shallow pans sunk into the soil with beer or de-alcoholized beer work as a slug trap. Slugs are attracted to the yeasty smell, lean in for a drink, fall in and drown.

Fruity traps also work. Place a hollow grapefruit rind or cantaloupe shell hollow-side down to catch the slugs. Boards placed around the garden will also work as a trap.

Collect the slugs from these traps, then drop them into a bucket of soapy water. "If handling these critters makes you squeamish, use a pair of tweezers," advises Barkley.

Diatomaceous earth or crushed eggshells spread around plants will also control this pest she notes. "The rough surface scratches the slug's soft body causing dehydration.

Copper stripping can also be used as a slug barrier. Copper carries a very mild electrical charge that slugs can detect, so they don't cross it. Barkley recommends copper strips about five cm wide.

"Insecticides won't work on slugs because they aren't insects, they are mollusks. So don't try an insecticide," she says. "However, metaldehyde can be used as a chemical control."

Metaldehyde comes in at least two formulations. One is a slug tape that acts as a barrier. The other, bait, can be laid out under boards or fruit rinds.

"Placing the bait under boards or grapefruit keeps the bait dry, and since slugs naturally congregate under these type of objects, the bait is convenient," she says.

Barkley also has a warning about using slug bait. "Slug bait can poison dogs and cats, so take care in where and how you place it. And, as with any chemical application, it's important you read the label before you use it."

There are also a number of natural slug predators. Birds such as robins and ducks like to eat slugs. Gartersnakes, toads and salamanders also eat slugs. Insects predators include ground beetles, soldier beetles, centipedes and rove beetles.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Agri-News briefs

Great White North Pumpkin weigh-off October 1

The fifth annual Smoky Lake pumpkin weigh-off returns on October 1. The Smoky Lake event is one of five Canadian sites involved in the World Pumpkin Confederation Weigh-off. Cash prizes are awarded for the 10 heaviest pumpkins. There are also prizes for the heaviest squash and watermelon. Entrants come from throughout Alberta as well as Saskatchewan. The weigh-off has expanded into a complete fair running September 30 through October 2. Activities include a bench show, farmers' market, a pumpkin petting zoo, a pumpkin puff and pant race, pancake breakfast and a pumpkin classic golf tournament. The official weigh-off begins at 10 a.m. For more information, call the Pumpkin Hotline (between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.) at (403)656-3674 or (403)656-3720.

Angora goat field day September 10

The Spirit Rider Farm near Rocky Mountain House is the site of an angora goat field day on September 10. The event is sponsored by the Alberta Mohair Producers Association. Angora goats produce mohair fibres. The field day will cover a variety of topics including nutrition, marketing, stock selection, breeding, kidding, management, guardians, showing, mohair grading and processing. Spinning, dying and shearing demonstrations are also on the agenda. Other features are a chevon cook-off and veterinarian presentation. Activities begin at 9 a.m. Lunch is \$5. For more information, call (403)845-3515.

Course offers help with on-line research

Natural resource professionals who are looking for a cost-effective way to find information might be interested in a University of Alberta extension course. The on-line research for the natural resource professional course runs three Thursdays in September, starting on September 8. The course includes an introduction to using CD-ROMs and remote data bases. Hands-on practice is included. A familiarity with computing is an asset to taking the course. Enrolment is limited. For more information, contact Michael Splinter at (403)492-3035. Or, to register call Shelia Greenberg at (403)492-3029.

Women in business connection September 28

A special networking event for women in business in the Edmonton area will be held September 28. Event organizer is Lynnette de Baat who publishes **The Connection**, a newsletter for women in business. Participants get a chance to tell the assembled group who they are and what they do. As well, participants can meet each other at networking tables. There will also be three motivational speakers. The formal agenda runs from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. This is the fourth networking event in a series that has also run in Calgary, Red Deer and Stettler. Another Calgary event is scheduled for October. Registration is required, although there is no admission fee. For more information or to register call de Baat in Calgary at 280-1383 or toll-free at 1-800-889-5268.

Cattlemen'94 roundup at Kamloops

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association is holding its annual convention in Kamloops September 14 through 16. Challenges of change is the theme. Feature speakers have an international flavor, as they hail from Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Japan and the U.S. Topics include beef quality, grading, foreign trade and land rights issues. For more information or to register, call the CCA office in Calgary at (403)244-4487.

Winter fruit and vegetable storage workshop

The Sustainable Agriculture Association is presenting a fall workshop on storing fruits and vegetables over winter. The workshop will be held at Lindsay Park in Calgary on October 1 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The instructor is Guert Lund. Topics covered include: how to choose the right location and build a root cellar; how to properly store vegetables for winter use; and, how to store fruit to keep it longer. To register, call Barbara Ross at (403)243-9697.

Warmblood Horse association has full September schedule

The Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association has several upcoming events during mid-September. A dressage clinic, with Manfred Lopp, is September 12 through 14 at Aspen Ridge in Calgary. Loop will do another clinic September 16 at Milner Downs in Langley, B.C. That's followed on September 17 and 18 with inspections, the Autumn Classic Dressage show, a breed orientation seminar and a conformation judging clinic. For more information about the events at Milner Downs, call Joan Moore at (604)796-2558. A jumping clinic is scheduled for September 13 and 14. The location is to be announced. For more information call Moore, or the Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association at (403)786-2703.

Video visit to Rainbow Cafe

Pierre Sans Fat, host at "The Rainbow Cafe", takes you on an entertaining tour of healthy eating. Each part of the rainbow represents a different food group in Canada's Guide to Healthy Eating. In the 15-minute video, Pierre emphasizes the food choices you can make on your way to a healthier lifestyle. The Alberta Agriculture produced video is available for loan from all of its 52 district offices. It can also be borrowed by writing the Multi-Media Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Coming agricultural events

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Inspections at the Windege Eastern Canadian Breeders Show
Ste. Justine De Newton, Quebec September 4-5
Fermes Windege Farm-(514)764-3615-Ste. Justine De Newton, Quebec

The First World Conference of Professionals in Agronomy
Santiago, Chile September 6-8
Embassy of Chile-(613)235-9940, Ottawa, Ontario

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Orientation Seminar and Judging Clinic
Spruce Meadows
Calgary September 8
Spruce Meadows-974-4200-Calgary

Online Research for the Natural Resource Professional [course #7726]
University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton September 8-22 (three Thursdays)
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Foal Futurity and Mare Show Inspections
Millarville Sports Grounds
Calgary September 9
Millarville Sports Grounds-(403)931-2202

Angora Goat Field Day
Spirit Rider Farm
Rocky Mountain House September 10
Brian and Lisa Harbidge-(403)845-3515-Rocky Mountain House

The Masters and Equi-Fair
Spruce Meadows
Calgary September 7-11
Sharon McLennan or Randy Fedorak-(403)974-4200-Calgary

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Dressage Clinic
Aspen Ridge
Calgary September 12-14
Aspen Ridge-(403)237-8106-Calgary

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Jumping Clinic
Location TBA September 13-14
Joan Moore-(604)796-2558-Harrison Hot Springs, B.C.

Outdoor Farm Show '94
Burford, Ontario September 13-15
Ginty Jocius-(519)822-2890-Guelph, Ontario

World Potato Congress '94
Harrogate Yorkshire, England September 11-13
Canadian Congress Office-(902)368-8885-Charlottetown, PEI

Canadian Cattlemens Association Convention
Kamloops, British Columbia September 14-16
Gina Grosenick-(403)244-4487-Calgary

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Dressage Clinic
Milner Downs
Langley, B.C. September 16
Joan Moore-(604)796-2558-Harrison Hot Springs, B.C.

Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association Breed Orientation Seminar and Conformation Judging

Milner Downs
Langley, B.C. September 17
Joan Moore-(604)796-2258-Harrison Hot Springs, B.C.

Lambs in Lacombe

Lacombe Fairgrounds September 17
Edith Williams-(403)784-3511-Lacombe

Second Annual Indoor High School Rodeo

Lakeland College
Vermilion September 17-18
Jim Leitheiser-(403)853-8642-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490
Canada wide

1994 International Plowing Match

Pembroke, Ontario September 20-24
Marion Skelly-(613)732-1994-Pembroke, Ontario

4th Annual Symposium of Groundwater and Soil Remediation

Calgary Convention Centre
Calgary September 21-23
Lise Gagne-(819)953-5227-Hull, Quebec

Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) Atlantic regional conference

Halifax, Nova Scotia September 27-28
Monika Simon-(514)982-0267-Montreal, Quebec

Three Day Stock Dog School

Battleford, Saskatchewan September 30, October 1-2
Earl and Phyllis Tinney-(306)937-2004-Battleford, Saskatchewan

Winter Storage of Fruits and Vegetables workshop

Lindsay Park, Calgary October 1
Barbara Ross-(403)243-9697-Calgary

Great White North Pumpkin Fair

Smoky Lake Agricultural Complex
Smoky Lake October 1
Pumpkin Hotline-(403)656-3674-Smoky Lake

1994 Canadian Lama Association Conference

The Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre
Edmonton October 6-9
Judith Chorney-(403)470-0590-Edmonton

Farm Housewives Conference

Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge October 13
Sharon Loran-(403)320-3314 or the Lethbridge Community College-(403)320-3323-Lethbridge

Day of the Horse Open House

Hill Equestrian Centre
Lloydminster October 15
Kristy Foote-(403)853-8641-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

Growing Christmas Trees-Getting Started [course #7633]

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton October 15-16
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

CCGD Ontario Regional Conference

Regal Constellation Hotel
Toronto, Ontario October 20
Monika Simon-(514)982-0267-Montreal, Quebec

Management Options for Private Forests Workshop and Field Tour

Cremona Community Hall
Cremona October 21-22
Tim Dietzler-(403)230-1401-Calgary

Grooming and Showmanship of Beef Cattle

Lakeland College
Vermilion October 22
Chris Spasoff-(403)853-8566-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

The Information Superhighway: Using Internet for Communication, Research and Education in Agriculture [course #7734]

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton October 28
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

The 1994 Farm Business Conference-How to Build a Successful Farm Business

Victoria Inn
Brandon, Manitoba November 2-3
Ray Kettenbach-(403)720-2648-Calgary; 1-800-665-8147 for registration

Sheep Seminar Series

Lethbridge Research Station, November 2
Olds College, Duncan Marshall Building, November 3
Stony Plain, November 4
Rycroft Courtesy Corner, November 5
Kim Standford-(403)381-5150-Lethbridge

Agriculture Computer Information Fair

Wildrose Pavillion, Lloydminster Exhibition Grounds
Lloydminster November 3
Chris Spasoff-(403)853-8566-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show

Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre
Edmonton November 3-4
Nigel Bowles-(403)489-1991-Edmonton

Alberta Horticultural Congress '94

Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre
Edmonton November 3-5
Betty Vladika-(403)422-1789-Edmonton

Northlands Farmfair'94

Edmonton Northlands
Edmonton November 4-12
Northlands-(403)471-7210-Edmonton

Basic Horse Health Care

Lakeland College

Vermilion November 5

Kristy Foote-(403)853-8623-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

CEF Western Rider School (Levels I and II)

Lakeland College

Vermilion November 5-6

Kristy Foote-(403)853-8641-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

CCGD Quebec Regional Conference

Montreal, Quebec November 7

Monika Simon-(514)982-0267-Montreal, Quebec

Geographic Information Systems [course #7702]

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension

Edmonton November 7-9

Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

The 1994 Farm Business Conference-How to Build a Successful Farm Business

The Capri Centre

Red Deer November 8-9

Ray Kettenbach-(403)720-2648-Calgary

Agri-Trade '94

Westerner Park

Red Deer November 9-12

Pat Kennedy-(403)347-4491-Red Deer

National Hydroponic Grower Conference

Orlando, Florida November 11-12

CropKing Inc. (216)725-5656-Orlando, Florida, USA

Canadian Wagyu Association Annual General Meeting

Sheraton Hotel

Calgary November 17

Marcel Morin-(403)289-5381-Calgary

1994 Peace Region Farm Women's Conference

Peace River November 17-18

Linda Hawk Sellin-(403)864-3597-Spirit River

Bud Williams Stockmanship School

Lakeland College

Vermilion November 19

Chris Spasoff-(403)853-8566-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

Alberta Irrigation Projects Association Annual Conference

Lethbridge Lodge Hotel

Lethbridge November 20-22

Stan Klassen/Verna Whitney-328-3063-Lethbridge

Artificial Insemination of Beef and Dairy Cattle

Lakeland College

Vermilion November 21-25

Chris Spasoff-(403)853-8566-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

1994 Farming for the Future Conference

Edmonton Inn

Edmonton November 23

Patrick Marce-(403)427-1956-Edmonton

1994 Canadian Bankers Association National Agricultural Finance Conference

Hotel Saskatchewan

Regina November 24-25

Mark Allan-(306)757-9963-Regina, Saskatchewan

Canadian Dexter Cattle Association Annual Conference and General Meeting

Regina, Saskatchewan November 25-27

Donna Hutchison-(403)749-3224-Louisa

CEF Western Rider School (Level III and IV)

Lakeland College

Vermilion November 26-27

Kristy Foote-(403)853-8641-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

Canadian Western Agribition

Regina, Saskatchewan November 26-December 2

Vanessa Headford-(306)565-0565-Regina, Saskatchewan

Alberta Barley Commission Annual Meeting

The Capri Centre

Red Deer December 1

Mona Carder or Andrea Lowther-(403)291-9111-Calgary; or, 1-800-265-9111

Alberta Pulse Growers' Commission Annual Meeting and Trade Fair

Westin Hotel

Edmonton December 5-7

Commission Office-(403)782-7838-Lacombe

1995**Western Canadian Wheat Growers' Association Annual Convention**

Chateau Lake Louise

Lake Louise January 4-6

Karen Wronko-(403)985-2449-Calmar

Unifarm Annual Convention

The Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre

Edmonton January 10-12

Shirley Dyck-(403)451-5912-Edmonton

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association 1995 Annual Convention

Marlborough Inn

Calgary January 12-14

Ron Axelson-(403)250-2509-Calgary; or, 1-800-363-8598

Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners Conference

The Capri Centre

Red Deer January 14-15

Les Burwash-(403)948-8532-Airdrie

The Information Superhighway: Using Internet for Communication, Research and Education in Agriculture [course #7735]

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton January 17
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Canada West Equipment Dealers Association 1995 Convention

Westin Hotel
Winnipeg January 19-21
William Lipsey-(403)250-7581-Calgary

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Annual Meeting

Westin Hotel
Edmonton January 19-21
Bill Witbeck-(403)782-4641-Lacombe

CCGD Western Regional Conference

Calgary January 27
Monika Simon-(514)982-0267-Montreal, Quebec; Bryan Walton
(403)435-8823-Edmonton

Alberta Farm Womens' Network Conference

Royal West Edmonton Inn
Edmonton January 27-28
Lee Pengilly-(403)934-6032-Strathmore

Alberta Branch Canadian Seed Growers' Association Annual Meeting

Westin Hotel
Edmonton February 1-3
Bill Witbeck-(403)782-4641-Lacombe

Man and Animals: Ethics, Rights and Responsibilities

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton February 6-7
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

1995 Conservation Workshop Acts 17th Annual Meeting and Farm Progress Trade Show

Westerner Exposition
Red Deer February 23-25
Peter Gamache-(403)422-4385-Edmonton; Russ
Evans-(403)936-5306-Calgary

Alberta Institute of Agrologists Annual Meeting and Professional Development Seminar

Medicine Hat Lodge
Medicine Hat March 16-18
Graham Gilchrist-(403)223-7907-Taber

75th Annual Conference Agriculture Institute of Canada—Global Realities and Society's Expectations"

Ottawa, Ontario July 9-13
Gary Loestler-(613)995-9554 or Alan
Bentley-(613)957-7078-Ottawa, Ontario

Agricultural Service Boards Tour

County of Forty Mile No. 8
Foremost July 11-14
Vernon Arnold-(403)867-3530-Foremost

Editor's Note: Alberta communities host a number of local fairs. Because there are so many, they are not listed here. However, an annual list of agricultural society fairs is compiled by the agricultural education and community services branch. The booklet is available by writing Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming **later in 1994**, or in **1995**?

- Please return this form by November 24, 1994 to:**

Agri-News Editor
Communications Division
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Edmonton, Alberta
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("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in **Agri-News**.
The next list will be **December 5, 1994**)

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Break green bridge to control wheat streak mosaic

Breaking the "green bridge" between summer and winter cereal crops is the key to controlling wheat streak mosaic says an Alberta Agriculture crop protection specialist.

"Wheat streak mosaic has been a problem in southern Alberta in 1994. Some fields of hard red spring and durum wheat were seriously damaged by the viral disease this season," says Ron Howard, head of the crop protection and utilization section at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

"Growers should take steps now to remove the bridge between this year's spring crops and winter crops so they can prevent a recurrence of the disease," he adds.

The wheat curl mites that carry the mosaic virus need a continuous source of living cereal plants, usually wheat or barley, to survive. In Alberta, the normal cycle of infection is for the virus to bridge from spring wheat to newly emerged winter wheat in the fall, and again from winter wheat back to the spring crop the following year.

"You can break the cycle," says Howard. "Basically, ensure there are no nearby sources of virus-infested mites when your winter wheat emerges this fall," he adds. For example, farmers should avoid seeding winter wheat next to an immature crop of spring wheat or barley just in case the crop is infected.

Farmers should also look at volunteer cereals and grasses growing in fields they plan to seed with spring or winter wheat crops. "These plants can be a source of the wheat streak mosaic virus, so should be destroyed by cultivation or herbicides at least two weeks before you seed a new crop," explains Howard.

When you seed is important to control he adds. "You may want to delay seeding your winter crops to avoid the green bridge. Normally the first two weeks of September are the best time for planting winter wheat in southern Alberta.

"Earlier seeding may greatly increase the chances of wheat streak mosaic. However, late seeding may result in reduced yields and increased winterkill," says Howard.

Wheat streak mosaic has been a sporadic problem in southern Alberta for almost 50 years. The virus is spread by the wheat curl

mite. Wind can spread these mites over short distances. Yellow streaks on plant leaves are an early symptom of the disease. Affected plants appear stunted and will produce fewer – often badly shrivelled – kernels.

Contact: Dr. Ron Howard
362-3391

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AGRI-NEWS

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch

Record canola crop's price depends on demand

Both Canadian and world oilseed production is heading for record totals, and prices here will depend heavily on export demand says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Export buying activity has been supporting the canola market and is the key to pricing in 1994-95," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"We'll need to export about four million tonnes to keep carryover stocks from growing to be a burden," he adds

Japanese buyers are expected to import about 1.7 million tonnes of Canadian canola in 1994-95. Another million will likely go to Mexico, the U.S. and, hopefully, China. "But, to meet a four million tonne export program, we need to sell close to 1.3 million tonnes into Europe. And there's the wild card. Some reports suggest a million of those tonnes have already been booked, but that's not definite," he says.

While canola producers can be optimistic, the market could fall from its current level if export buys don't come through or farmer sales pick up. Dooley says producers need to weigh the prospect of further price gains with the potential for price declines, "And plan your sales accordingly."

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

Small wheat crop, improved returns

Canadian wheat growers do have something to look forward to in the 1994-95 crop year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Indications are that growers should have a better quality crop this year and there are prospects of better prices," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch.

Much of the crop remains in the field, but early indications are wheat quality will be much closer to normal this year. Grades higher than feed fetch higher prices.

As well, the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) increased its estimates in August. "Tighter world wheat supplies was an important factor in the price adjustment," notes Dooley.

Canada is one of several countries where wheat production is estimated to drop. Canadian wheat production, including durum, is estimated at 23.7 million tonnes. That's down four million tonnes from 1993 and will be the smallest wheat crop since 1988.

As well, drought has hit the Australian crop. Estimates are the total world wheat crop will be well below the five-year average and nearly 20 million tonnes less than the 1993-94 output.

"All that translated into strengthened prices over the past month or so," notes Dooley.

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

Heavier carcass weights a red flag

Alberta cattle producers take note, a red flag of warning has been hoisted in the fed cattle market.

"Heavy carcass weights should signal the industry that prices could remain under pressure this fall," says Ron Gietz, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Mid-August Alberta steer carcass weights have been climbing during the 1990s, from an average of 721 pounds in 1991 to 789.5 pounds this year. As well, carcass weights are running at record high levels across Canada. Before this year, department records indicate the heaviest weekly average steer weight in Alberta was in late October 1991.

"Most producers will remember the impact heavy carcass weights had on local prices 1991. As then, packers have recently widened their basis and begun paying more for heifers than for steers," notes Gietz.

Heavy carcass weights are also a problem in major U.S. fed cattle markets. "Trading patterns were already unstable, so U.S. feedlot operators seemed to be willing to hold back cattle hoping for higher prices. Instead, feedlots weren't adequately cleared in mid-August. Coupled with excellent feeding weather, the result has been extremely high slaughter weights and continued high beef production," he says.

High production is one of the reasons a fall rally in fed cattle is at risk, unless the U.S. marketing pace improves. "As I've said before, there are large numbers of cattle to be marketed in the short term before tighter numbers ease supply concerns," Gietz says.

He forecasts Alberta direct sale (ADS) steer prices to average \$86/cwt. during September, \$87 in October, up to \$90 in November and falling off slightly to \$89 in December before going up in 1995. The forecasts are based on a 73 cent Canadian dollar to its U.S. counterpart.

In the Western Canadian feeder cattle market, heavy feeder prices have increased by about five dollars per hundredweight since the late spring.

Mid-August prices for eight to nine hundred pound feeder steers averaged just below \$110/cwt. in central Alberta. That compares to prices slightly above a \$110 market in 1993.

"Price ranges are wide, even on the heavier cattle, reflecting the choosiness of buyers," he adds.

As with the U.S. fed cattle market, U.S. feeder cattle futures have been volatile. "The fed cattle market outlook was one factor, the other was the U.S. corn crop," says Gietz.

"The market dipped in early summer, but November futures have rebounded," he adds. "Recent Chicago trading in the 77 to 78 cent range corresponds to an Alberta heavy steer price in November of about \$107/cwt."

Gietz says his earlier forecasts for the fall calf run haven't changed. He expects good quality steer calves to trade in a wide

range centering around \$125/cwt. Heavy feeder steers may average close to \$110 to begin the season, likely tapering off to closer to \$105/cwt. later in the fall. Again, those forecasts are based on a 73 cent Canadian dollar.

"If prices do follow more or less along these projections, 1994 will post the second highest calf prices on record — but that's not adjusted for inflation," says Gietz.

Gietz also has a reminder for producers. "The steep slide in fed cattle prices this past spring will be on the minds of most feeder cattle buyers. As a result, calves capable of finishing out by April will be in much higher demand than calves that will be ready by June or later.

"There's been another year of herd expansion and there's larger supplies of feeder cattle in Western Canada. Feedlots have more stock to choose from and can be more particular about their purchases, especially later in the season. For producers, that means careful sorting of stock and paying attention to marketing details."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Good quality red fescue harvest in the Peace

This year's creeping red fescue crop is good quality, but its price looks like it will be a poor cousin to other special crops and grains says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

The quality estimate is for a nearly complete harvest in Alberta's Peace country. "Producers are faced with bids ranging from 22 to 25 cents per pound," says Matthew Machielse. "Unfortunately, it doesn't appear prices will improve as our competitors also are forecast to take off an average to above average crop."

Canadian grass seed growers may get some backlash from their U.S. counterparts related to low prices he adds. "The U.S. may attempt to point a finger at Canadian growers for falling prices. The usual plan of attack is subsidy levels. However, that will be extremely difficult because there isn't direct government support to the sector.

"The political situation will be monitored. An open U.S. export market is vital to the Alberta grass seed industry," says Machielse.

In other special crop news, pulse and mustard crop bids strengthened through August even though crop prospects remain good. "As well, good September weather should translate generally into very good quality special crops," he adds.

Strong feed pea bids have been one of the biggest market surprises. Bids ranged between \$4.60 and \$4.75 per bushel in late August. "Some producers are holding out for higher prices, but those prices will likely only be in the very short term," says Machielse.

European demand for protein substitutes was a positive influence on feed pea prices. European buyers were looking to peas because of rising domestic feed grain prices. "However," warns

Machielse, "that demand will likely ease as new crop oilseed meal comes on stream. Once that happens, pea prices could easily fall to around \$4.25 per bushel."

While mustard prices are also in a strong trading pattern, there's a firmer demand base and therefore less downside risk. Carryover demand should also lessen the chance of market declines.

On the other hand, canary seed and lentil markets are less predictable. "There's a wait and see attitude," says Machielse. "Large seeded acreage initially was a negative. But accurate yield levels have kept both markets quiet. Probably very little trade will take place until the crop is in the bin, and yield and quality can be assessed."

Contact: Matthew Machielse
427-5387

Pork oversupplies found in the freezer

The answer to "Where's the pork in an oversupplied market?" has been found in cold storage says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Literally, the US market has pushed overproduction into the freezer," says Matthew Machielse of the market analysis and statistics branch. "That's not particularly good news for producers."

Hog prices have been relatively stable over past months, even though production numbers were growing. "Why those prices stayed stable seems to be because pork was being frozen instead of put out on the shelves as fresh product," he says.

As a result, frozen ham and loin stocks have hit 20-year highs in the U.S. This has reduced industry margins. Pork value is immediately discounted if it hits the freezer before entering the wholesale trade.

"Now aggressive pricing will be the only way to reduce stock levels in the near term," says Machielse. "Those reduced prices will also be needed to both move pork and to compete with large beef and poultry supplies."

For Alberta producers, this situation means there is little opportunity to limit their price risks. "Most deferred live hog futures contracts are trading at or near the high 30s on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange," he adds. "This is a very strong long term support level, unlikely to be broken for extended periods. That means there's little price protection available in hog futures."

Machielse forecasts Alberta index 100 monthly hog prices to average \$1.40/kg through both September and October. His November prediction is \$1.38, falling to \$1.35 in December and running at a \$1.30 average through January and February.

Contact: Matthew Machielse
427-5387

Agricultural tax update returns in late October

For the 14th consecutive year the popular farm tax seminar for accountants and lawyers will be held in six locations across Alberta in late October and early November.

"Our Agriculture Tax Update for Professionals has been very popular," notes Merle Good of the farm business management branch in Olds. "Last year over 500 people attended the seminars."

The 1994 seminar will have two main focuses: the implication of the \$100,000 and \$500,000 capital gains exemptions and family farm transfers; and, the dissolution and reorganizations of business arrangements. "These aren't the only subjects covered," adds Good. "The seminars are a relatively complete update of agricultural issues facing the professional's farm clients."

Seminar agendas also include a farm property transfer tool kit, creative financing, and taxation implications of commodity trading, current cases and Revenue Canada interpretations.

"As always and by popular demand, there will also be the 'tips and traps' section," notes Good.

The first seminar in the series will be Grande Prairie on October 25, followed by Edmonton on October 26 and Red Deer on October 27. Lethbridge is the first stop in November on November 1, followed by Calgary on November 2. The final seminar is in Lloydminster on November 3.

The \$150 registration fee includes lunch, coffee breaks, GST and a binder of related materials. Pre-registration is required before October 19.

For more information, contact Good at the farm business management branch in Olds at (403)556-4240.

Contact: Merle Good
556-4277

Fall doesn't have to be the end of your geraniums

Your geraniums can hang around this winter and bloom again next summer if you rescue them before the first frost says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Geraniums are easily overwintered, but you do have to get out and get them in before the first frost," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

To start, before the first frost, cut plants back severely to the third or fourth leaf bud from the base. Dig up the plants and pack close together in boxes or other suitable containers.

"Milk containers work well for individual plants and you can also write the variety name on the side," notes Barkley.

Then, cover the roots with potting soil, water lightly and store in a cool – four to seven degree Celsius – dark spot. Let the soil dry completely, then water only enough to prevent shrivelling.

"Another storing method is to just let the geraniums hang around through the winter," she says.

This method doesn't use soil. Instead, shake soil off the geranium roots, then hang the plants upside down in a cool, dry place. Tops will drop off, so cutting isn't necessary.

Then in late February, plant a geranium in a pot of good quality potting soil. Place the pots in indirect light for a few days, then move them to a sunny window. Pinch plants back to keep them bushy.

If gardeners want to take cuttings off the plants to start more geraniums, they should bring the old plants up in January to allow for extra growing time.

Cuttings can also be taken before the first fall frost and overwintered as house plants. "This is tricky," warns Barkley, "since our houses tend to be too hot and light level too low during the winter."

"If you're going to try this, I suggest picking the brightest and coolest room in your house to overwinter geraniums. Water between October and March just enough to keep the leaves from wilting."

While this method does work, it does require growing space.

"Another option, if your space is limited, is to take cuttings in January, February or March from overwintered mother plants," she adds.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Falling needles not an alarm call

Fall means falling leaves and falling leaves mean fall, but "leaf drop" isn't limited to deciduous trees says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Spruce, pine and cedar will drop needles just as common deciduous trees shed their leaves in the autumn," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

"Usually, you don't notice the process in evergreens because it's gradual and the plant's new growth conceals the old needles," she adds.

Foliage on the interior of the conifer turns yellow, then brown and eventually falls off. Sometimes, many needles discolor all at once and the plant appears to be dying. This shedding is probably most noticeable with pine trees.

"So, you don't necessarily have to be alarmed if you notice your evergreens are dropping needles," says Barkley.

Pines hold their needles for three to four years. Spruce and fir hold their needles longer. Pine drop whole needle bunches because of how they grow in groups of two, three or five. Spruce drop individual needles and not necessarily the oldest needles. Cedars (*Thuja spp.*) and some junipers have scale-like leaves covering branchlets instead of needles. In this case, entire branchlets will drop off during autumn shedding.

"After a stressful winter, needles can drop in the spring. Once lost these needles won't be replaced because they draw from the tree's strength rather than helping to sustain the trees," says Barkley.

"Some conditions will cause your evergreens to drop more needles than usual," she notes. Usually those conditions are related to stress ranging through drought, poorly drained soils, transplant shock or spider mites.

Barkley says the best strategy for healthy evergreens is proper watering and insect control.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Agri-News briefs

Peak lamb marketing harbinger modest decline

While the time seems ripe for lamb prices to fall, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst forecasts the decline will be modest. "U.S. lamb prices are near record high levels but the seasonal production rise is ahead. The same situation is coming in the local market – peak marketing and low prices," says Ron Gietz. "I expect the fall decline to be quite modest on both sides of the border," he adds. A smaller U.S. flock means relatively tighter supplies than a year ago. Gietz says Alberta lamb prices could drift below the \$90/cwt level, but aren't as likely to drop below \$80/cwt. this fall. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Engineering role in fine tuning says AAEAC

The role of engineering spans all commodities and processes in the agriculture and food industry says the head of the Alberta Agriculture Engineering Advisory Committee (AAEAC). "Technology has significantly impacted our industry over the last 50 years," says Russ Nelson. "At the rate technology is expanding, engineering is an element of any production or processing system," he adds. AAEAC serves to identify research needs, concerns and future issues that will impact the industry. Nelson says the numerous groups that make up AAEAC benefits the entire industry. "The benefit of multi-disciplinary teams is more efficient production and processing systems, better farming practices and an increased awareness of emerging issues," he explains. AAEAC membership includes manufacturers, dealers and the service industry, producer and producer groups, universities and colleges, and federal and provincial government. For more information on AAEAC, contact Nelson in Olds at 556-8296, or AAEAC Secretary Darcy Fitzgerald in Edmonton at 427-2181.

Getting started growing Christmas trees course

Growing Christmas trees is much more than sticking evergreens in the ground and selling them years later. Just how much is involved will be covered in a two-day University of Alberta faculty of extension course October 15 and 16. The course includes how to choose the right species, site preparation, pest and animal control, market trends and equipment. Geordie McKay, the largest Christmas tree grower in Saskatchewan is one of the instructors. McKay is joined by James Brandt, of the Canadian Forest Service, and Byron Grundberg, co-ordinator of private land forestry in Alberta. Enrollment is limited to 30 people. Early bird registration, before October 1, is \$145. the regular fee is \$165. For more information about the course, contact Michael Splinter at (403)492-3035, or to register call Sheila Greenberg at (403)492-3029.

Groundwater, soil remediation symposium in Calgary September 21-23

The fourth annual symposium on groundwater and soil remediation will be held in Calgary on September 21 through 23. Results and findings from current groundwater and soil remediation research, development and demonstration projects will be presented. The symposium will interest a wide range of stakeholders including researchers, regulators and industry at national and international levels. On-site registration is \$375, one-day registration is \$150 and there's a student rate of \$50. The symposium will be held at the Calgary Convention Centre. For more information, contact Lise Gagné of Environment Canada in Hull at (819)953-5227.

September 19, 1994

The Way We See It aims teen-to-teen

Rural high school students received an official invitation to participate in the *The Way WE See It* last week (Sept. 15) when campaign details were outlined by its project partners at Tofield High School.

The campaign is the newest farm safety promotion in Alberta and is designed to reach teenagers through teenagers. "Harnessing the power of teen perspective and language is what *The Way WE See It* campaign is all about," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's farm safety program.

"UFA, CBC Television and Alberta Agriculture have created an exciting opportunity for rural high school students to deliver a farm safety message to their peers," he adds.

"We believe the best way to reach teens is to ask them to show us the way **they** see farm safety by producing their own TV commercial," says UFA president Orval Sorken. "Teens are a wealth of talent and ability, and we want to tap into this wonderful resource," he adds.

Rural students have a November 15 deadline to produce a 30-second farm machinery safety commercial. Every entrant receives a campaign T-shirt. The top three entries earn post-secondary scholarships of \$2,500, \$1,500 and \$1,000. The first place commercial will be produced professionally by CBC and will be shown during Hockey Night in Canada next spring. The commercial's creators also participate in this reproduction as actors or crew members.

Bob Chelmick, co-anchor of CBC Alberta News Hour, was scheduled at press time to address the students before they saw the premiere of a six-minute video. All rural schools will receive it as part of a promotional package. The packages, mailed out this week, also include posters and brochures with contest details.

"When the message is in language from their peers, teens may hear it more clearly," says Sorken. "And as these students develop their commercials, their awareness of potential dangers on farms should be heightened."

"We believe *The Way WE See It* is a winner for everyone involved and everyone who will see the final product," says Brian Gray, CBC network sales manager in Edmonton.

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"We feel the campaign will have a great impact on the health and safety of the entire farming community when the commercial airs," Gray adds.

Kyeremanteng notes the campaign targets teenagers. "In our research, we've found rural farm youth between the ages of 12 and 19 are the most inexperienced farm machinery operators, and by extension, are more likely to have an accident.

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AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

"We believe teen-to-teen delivery of a farm safety message will be effective because peer influence is so powerful. Our ultimate hope, as with any safety campaign, is changed safety attitudes to prevent farm injuries and deaths," he adds.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng Orval Sorken
427-2186 258-4508
or Brian Gray at 468-2352

Editor's note: A complete media package with background stories is available from the department's farm safety program office in Edmonton.

August provided good harvest weather

Harvest weather was generally good, warm but a little wet, in Alberta during August says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"August's average temperature was 0.5 degrees above normal," notes Peter Dzikowski. "Total precipitation for the month was 16 per cent above normal." These averages are based on data recorded at 59 Environment Canada climate stations across the province. The climate stations averaged 63.5 mm of precipitation, 8.9 mm above the 1961 to 1990 average.

"However, those are averages and some areas of the province were actually dry, with others well above normal," he notes.

Most of the north and south were dry. Precipitation totals were 20 to 80 per cent below normal. Bow Island reported only 1.0 mm of rain. Values of August rain between 10 mm and 40 mm were common in southern Alberta.

On the other hand, the southern Peace and central Alberta received between 60 and 140 mm of precipitation, or 40 to 120 per cent above long-term monthly normals. Grande Prairie and Edmonton [Nanaimo] reported 138 mm and 136 mm respectively.

"In spite of the wet weather, the beginning of the harvest wasn't delayed. Crops dried quickly with the warm temperatures, allowing good harvest progress," says Dzikowski.

August's average temperature was 16.3° compared to the long-term average temperature of 15.8°C. "The Peace region reported temperatures the most above normal, from one to 1.5 degrees. Most other Alberta locations reported temperatures up to one degree above normal," he notes.

In agricultural regions, Sundre reported the coldest monthly average, 14.1°C, in the province during August. "However, that average was still 0.4 degrees above Sundre's normal," says Dzikowski. "Sundre also had the distinction of reporting the most rain during August, 172.2 mm."

The warmest monthly average of 19.8°C, 1.1 degrees above normal, was reported at the Onefour station.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

When a rodent is a rat

Reported rat sightings are more frequent in late summer and early fall, but usually turn out to be other rodents on the move as winter approaches.

"Alberta has maintained its rat free status over the last 40 plus years with the aid of vigilant citizens," says John Bourne, Alberta Agriculture's northeast regional supervisor of problem wildlife.

"But because a vast majority of Albertans don't really know what a Norway rat looks like any more, we tend to get a lot of calls right now that turn out to be false sightings," he says.

Those sightings include several native rodents – Norway rats were introduced to North America from Europe – including ground squirrels, pocket gophers, woodrats and muskrats. Young rodents, in particular, are moving out to establish their own territory.

"As a result, young rodents often wind up in not so typical places or awkward situations – ground squirrels in garages, vehicles and back porches; pocket gophers in bale stacks or barns and sheds with dirt floors; and, muskrats in dugouts, stubble fields, water troughs and along roadways.

"Or, you see rat-like animals scurrying across a road, field or yard. Sometimes a family pet brings one to your lawn or back doorstep," says Bourne.

If you see something that looks like a Norway rat, identifying it can be easy or difficult. Ease depends on what evidence is present.

"That's the first tip we have for people, save the evidence such as droppings or the remains of the suspect animal," he says.

Droppings are a particularly good clue. They are black, olive-pit shaped and about a half inch long. "There'll also be lots if the rat or rats have been there for several days," adds Bourne.

If the rodent is sighted near buildings or other structures, look for runways, holes or chewing under or near planks and board. Runs and holes are about two to three inches across.

Norway rats aren't very large or very colorful. They measure about six inches from nose tip to the base of the tail. Their tail is nearly as long as their body, about four to five inches, and is round, hairless and tapered. Rats weigh about half a pound. Their feet are small, unwebbed and pinkish. Claws are short. Ears don't reach the eyes. Their eyes are small and black. Norway rat coats are short and coarse. Their color ranges from light tan to mid-brown and they have buff to white bellies.

"They are also hardy," notes Bourne. "Norway rats can survive almost anywhere as long as they have food and cover." They do prefer structures they can crawl under, from bale stacks and silage pits to grain bins and sheds.

Norway rats don't hibernate, so require a continuous food supply over the winter.

For more information on Norway rat control, contact your local by-law enforcement officer, municipal agricultural fieldman or Alberta Agriculture district office.

Also available is a factsheet *Rat Control in Alberta*. The publication is available by writing Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 682-2.

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Possessing rats illegal in Alberta

A rat control zone and provincial law are two of the ways Alberta has been able to maintain its rat-free status for more than 40 years.

"Most Albertans along the province's eastern border, are familiar with our rat patrol and rat control officers. Many Albertans may also be aware – and proud – of being rat-free," notes John Bourne, supervisor of problem wildlife in the province's northeast region.

"However, they might not know it's illegal to own a Norway rat or one of its derivatives," adds Bourne.

Norway rats are designated pests in Alberta's **Agricultural Pests Act**. Also included is any other rat species or strain derived from the *Rattus* genus.

"People occasionally bring these near-rats home as pets, but they are illegal. Permits are only given, and required, in special circumstances," says Bourne.

Research facilities and zoos can apply for a permit to keep rats.

However, they must meet certain standards also set by provincial regulations.

For more information, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture regional problem wildlife supervisor, or local by-law enforcement officer, municipal agricultural fieldman or Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Turkey time more quickly

If you're someone who got up early to put your Thanksgiving turkey in the oven, the Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency has news that could give you an extra hour of shut-eye.

The national agency is involved in an on-going research study into the amount of time and temperature level needed to safely cook turkey. That research indicates turkey doesn't need to be cooked as long as current standards.

A stuffed, whole turkey is safely cooked when internal temperature of the thigh meat reaches 180°F, or 82°C. An unstuffed turkey is safe at a slightly lower temperature, 170°F, or 77°C.

"Cooks will need a meat thermometer to check those temperatures, but that investment pays off in reduced cooking

times," says Janice Shields of the Alberta Turkey Growers' Marketing Board.

For example, the time needed to cook a 10 to 12 pound (4.5 to 5.5 kg) turkey is approximately three and half to four hours. A time saving, notes Shields, of 30 minutes to an hour compared to previous cooking charts.

"This is great news for cooks who traditionally viewed cooking a whole turkey as a time-consuming chore," adds Shields. "They'll be able to cook and serve turkey in less time, so have more time out of the kitchen."

"That was exactly the purpose of the study – to show consumers that whole turkeys can be cooked safely in a shorter amount of time."

Shields also reminds cooks – or families – who want turkey, but not a whole bird, to look for a variety of turkey parts. Grocery stores now carry drumsticks, wings and breasts. Turkey fillets, ground turkey and turkey based luncheon meats are also available.

Contact: Janice Shields
465-5755

New Roasting Times For Whole Turkeys

*** New research shows whole turkeys take less time to cook!**

Use these new cooking times to prepare roast turkey that's moist, tender and delicious.

Weight	Oven times 325°F (160°C)	
	Stuffed	Unstuffed
6 – 8 lbs (3.0 – 3.5 kg)	3 – 3¼ hrs	2½ – 2¾ hrs
8 – 10 lbs (3.5 – 4.5 kg)	3¼ – 3½ hrs	2¾ – 3 hrs
10 – 12 lbs (4.5 – 5.5 kg)	3½ – 3¾ hrs	3 – 3¼ hrs
12 – 16 lbs (5.5 – 7.0 kg)	3¾ – 4 hrs	3¼ – 3½ hrs
16 – 22 lbs (7.0 – 10.0 kg)	4 – 4½ hrs	3½ – 4 hrs

Your turkey is done when:

- a meat thermometer in the inner thigh reads 180°F (82°C) for a stuffed turkey.
 - a meat thermometer in the inner thigh reads 170°F (77°C) for a unstuffed turkey.
 - the legs move easily when twisted and the juices run clear.
- When the turkey is done remove it from the oven for barbecue. Cover it with foil and let it stand 15 – 20 minutes before carving.

* Diversified Research for the Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency 1994

Tips for the Thanksgiving turkey

Turkey, stuffing – both bird and dinner guests – and leftovers are a typical Thanksgiving trio.

"All can be food safety issues, too," says Linda St. Onge, an Alberta Agriculture food and nutrition specialist. "Taking care in preparation and serving is for your family's and guests' benefit."

The first issue is related to thawing the turkey. Two methods are recommended by the experts at the Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency. One is putting the bird in the refrigerator to thaw. The other, is soaking in cold water.

"Using the refrigerator is the longer method. You'll need to leave the bird in your fridge about 10 hours for every kilogram of meat," notes St. Onge.

In comparison, thawing in cold water takes about two hours per kilogram of meat. St. Onge has a few tips on using this method. "Start by leaving the turkey in its wrapping. Cover the turkey with cold water. Replace the water every few hours," she says.

St. Onge adds a turkey can also be thawed in the microwave. "Check the manufacturer's instructions," she advises.

"And whatever you do, don't leave your turkey out on the counter to thaw. That's an invitation for potential food poisoning," she emphasizes.

Once the turkey is thawed, it should be kept in the refrigerator and cooked within 48 hours. "Again, never leave it sitting out at room temperature," she adds.

Stuff the turkey immediately before sticking it in the oven. "Never do it the night before, and the maximum safety is in cooking the stuffing separately from the turkey," says St. Onge.

Warm stuffing creates an ideal environment for bacterial growth. Its presence in the bird can be hazardous before, during and after the turkey is cooked.

"You can cook stuffing separately in a casserole dish. The only thing you'd do differently than if you were stuffing the bird, is to add extra liquid so the stuffing is moist enough to stick together," she says. Add 25 millilitres (ml) [two tablespoons] of liquid for each 250 to 375 ml (one to one and a half cups) of dressing. Removing some of the juices from the turkey's roasting pan is a good choice she says. The casserole stuffing should be cooked in the oven for the last half hour of roasting time.

On the other hand, if you prefer to stick with the traditionally stuffed bird, St. Onge has more advice. "Once the turkey is cooked, immediately remove all the stuffing. If stuffing isn't removed, it may stay warm long enough for bacteria to contaminate the leftover turkey and stuffing."

The best roasting temperature for turkey is 325°F (160°C). Higher temperatures cause protein toughening and shrinkage. Lower temperatures aren't recommended because naturally present bacteria might not be killed.

"Once the turkey has started roasting it must be completely cooked before removing from the oven," St. Onge says. The turkey can be covered with a loose tent of aluminum foil. During

the last half hour of cooking, remove foil to baste and allow the bird to brown.

The most reliable way to test "doneness" is with a meat thermometer. "The Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency has just come out with new recommendations about internal temperature and doneness. But, you do need a meat thermometer to do this check," says St. Onge. An internal thigh muscle temperature of 180°F (82°C) indicates the turkey is cooked. The internal temperature of stuffing should be at least 165°F (74°C). **[See separate story in this issue.]**

After cooking, keep the turkey hot, above 140°F (60°C) or refrigerate at below 40°F (4°C). "The simple rule is keep it hot, or refrigerate it," says St. Onge.

There are also rules for leftovers. Cooked turkey can be stored in the refrigerator for three to four days. It can be stored in the freezer for up to four months. Leftover stuffing must be refrigerated and used within three days.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Horticultural congress and trade show returns in November

The eighth annual Alberta Horticultural Congress and the associated Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show will be at a new location November 3 through 5.

"We were in downtown Edmonton last year, and have moved to the westend Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre for 1994," notes congress chair Abraham van der Breggen.

The congress offers educational seminars for professional and commercial vegetable, fruit and greenhouse growers, as well as florists. There's also the latest in commercial, technical and other trade items at the Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show, co-sponsored by the congress and the Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association (LANTA).

"The whole event is also for anyone who has just started or is thinking about starting out in a horticultural business," adds van der Breggen. "It's a terrific opportunity not only to learn from the technical sessions, but also from other growers and professionals."

Keynote speaker is Norine Larson, a teenage productivity expert, who has spent 23 years working with young adults. Among her clients is McDonald's restaurants. "The horticultural industry typically uses young adult and teen employees. This group doesn't act or react like older employees. Ms Larson's presentations are geared to help employers understand young employees and have them understand you," says van der Breggen.

Session topics range from starting a green house and crop diagnosis through promoting U-pick operations and developing

new horticultural food products. There's also a special Farmers' Market seminar.

Five different provincial horticultural organizations also hold annual meetings during the congress. They are the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board (AFVMB), the Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association (AGGA), Alberta Market Gardeners Association (AMGA), Flowers Canada [Alberta Region] and the Fruit Growers Society of Alberta (FGSA).

The sold-out trade show features more than 150 exhibitors who serve Alberta's horticultural industry. It also will feature an author's row of horticultural authors including Brian Andrews, Lois Hole and Edgar Toop.

Early registration discounts are available – with payment – on or before October 15. The early bird price for full registration is \$85. It climbs to \$150 after October 15. There are also day and student rates as well as for proceedings. Registration to the congress includes admission to the trade show.

For more information about the congress, contact Simone Demers Collins at 422-1789. For more information about the trade show, contact LANTA at 489-1991.

*Contact: Simone Demers Collins
427-1789*

One control is maintaining an even moisture supply to the plants, especially during periods of hot weather when plants are actively growing. Using a mulch helps conserve soil moisture and eliminates cultivation that can damage roots. Also, avoid over fertilization and severe pruning.

"Finally, it might not hurt to do a soil test. That will tell you about nutrient levels and any adjustments you may need to make," says Barkley.

*Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391*

Controlling blossom-end rot

Blossom-end rot can prevent you from enjoying sun-ripened, juicy tomatoes from your garden says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"This condition strikes both tomatoes and peppers," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "Causes are many and a combination of controls are necessary," she adds.

The disease can be identified when a slight water-soaked blemish forms at the blossom end of the fruit. The form enlarges and darkens, eventually becoming a dry, sunken, leathery blotch.

This mark is dark brown to black on tomatoes, and lighter colored and papery in peppers. "Unfortunately, the marking isn't always visible. Sometimes it's on the inside of the fruit," notes Barkley.

Poor root development, root damage, a lack of water from high temperatures and wind, or fluctuating water supplies while the fruit is forming can bring on the condition. All keep the plant from drawing enough calcium from the soil quickly enough for fruit development.

As well, high humidity, soil salinity and high nitrogen and magnesium levels can also effect calcium uptake.

Herbicides, such as 2,4-D, can also cause increased blossom-end rot. In this case, leaves indicate the herbicide affect.

"You might not discover this condition until you harvest your tomatoes and peppers, so control is likely limited to next year," says Barkley. She suggests a few strategies to prevent blossom-end rot.

Agri-News briefs

Management options for private forests workshop and field tour

Anyone thinking of logging or clearing trees on their land will be interested in a management options for private forests workshop and tour October 21 and 22. The workshop will be held at the Cremona Community Hall (east of Carstairs). Regional experts and local landowners will share their experience about woodlot management during the first day. This includes planning, inventory, regulations, marketing and land use after logging. The second day includes a guided tour of nearby forests to illustrate some of the options and practises in southern Alberta. A \$30 fee includes lunches, coffee breaks, field tour and a woodlot manual. A tax deductible receipt will be issued by the seminar organizer, the Alberta Forestry Association. For more detailed information or to register, call the Alberta Forestry Association in Edmonton at 428-7582; or, one of the following agricultural service boards – MD of Rockyview in Calgary at 230-1401; MD of Bighorn in Exshaw at 673-3611; MD of Foothills in High River at 652-2341; or, the County of Mountain View in Didsbury at 335-3311.

Lakeland College "Day of the Horse" October 15

Lakeland College's Hill Equestrian Centre is holding a "Day of the Horse" open house on October 15. The open house runs from noon to 5 p.m. and features equine information and entertainment. Demonstrations include jumping, dressage, driving heavy horses, reining, Western pleasure and junior riders. A popular feature is dog and horse jumping relays. Admission is free. This is the second open house since the facility became part of Lakeland College. The centre is located three and one-half miles south of the Lloydminster Upgrader (east of Lloydminster on Highway 16). For more information, contact Kristy Foote at Lakeland College in Vermilion at (403)853-8641 or call 1-800-661-6490 (toll-free Canada wide).

WGSA early bird registration October 1

The Western Stock Growers Association (WGSA) will hold its 99th annual conference November 30 and December 1 in Medicine Hat. Registration is cheaper by the early bird deadline of October 1. The convention will be the official launch of the WGSA's centennial celebrations. One of the special events is a cattle drive. Applications for the drive will be available starting at the convention. For more information, contact centennial co-ordinator Rhonda Clark in Calgary at 250-9121.

Westlock PFRA office open house October 5

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration's (PFRA) new direction and involvement in rural communities is one of the things on the agenda at an open house at the PFRA's office in Westlock on October 5. Computer demonstrations and other displays are among activities. The open house runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call (403)349-3963.

September 26, 1994

Green Certificate level three opens course door wider

Green Certificate's level three training in farm business management has opened its doors wider for 1994-95.

"The course is now open to any farm or horticultural-related enterprise owner or operator," says course co-ordinator Erin Inglis. Courses will run from November 1994 to March 1995.

In the past, Green Certificate trainees had to complete one level of training before moving on to the next. So, level three training was only open to level two graduates.

"One reason for the change is because the horticulture industry came to us looking for a way to fill a need in their industry," says Inglis. "The result was a strategic alliance between the Horticulture Human Resource Council and the Green Certificate program and the level three farm business management program being opened up to horticulturists," she adds.

As part of the horticultural partnership, course content will be augmented with horticultural business case studies and examples.

Course eligibility was also expanded to include all farm owners and operators. "New operators, owners and managers who want or need to do farm business analysis will be particularly interested in the course," says Inglis.

The course covers a number of management topics from general business management practices to specifics such as cash flow management and marketing principles. **[See related story this issue on course content.]**

The level three farm business management course has been rewritten to reflect modern farm business management principles. The new look course ran for the first time last winter.

For more information, contact the Green Certificate program office in Edmonton at (403)427-2171, or the Horticulture Human Resource Council office in Okotoks at (403)938-6643

Contact: Erin Inglis
427-2171

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Farm business management training the "green" way

On-farm production training is probably the first thing people think of when Alberta Agriculture's Green Certificate program is mentioned, but the program also extends to farm business management.

The Green Certificate level three course will be offered starting in November 1994 and running through March 1995. The training course is open to level two program graduates, as well as to all farm and horticultural-related business owners, operators and managers.

Each course has 14 six-hour days of classroom instruction. They are every two weeks over five months. At the end, students

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
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submit their own business plan. "That's the practical aspect of this Green Certificate course – like the other levels of training – trainees directly apply what they're learning to their own operation," says Erin Inglis, course co-ordinator.

The course is geared to farm business management skills and practices. Training covers general management practices, financial and cash flow management, production processes, human resource management, and marketing and purchasing principles.

"Essentially the course helps participants develop and improve their skills, so they can use them to analyze their business," says Inglis. "It's about making and keeping your business profitable."

Courses will be held in at least four locations across the province covering southern, Calgary, central and Edmonton regions. "The response we get will dictate specific locations," notes Inglis.

Instructors are experienced in both agricultural and financial sectors. "That's another important aspect to the course; trainers have agricultural credentials as well as a financial services and or training background," she says.

Green Certificate farm training courses are designed by farmers for farmers. Green Certificate's first two training levels emphasize on-farm learning with some off-farm course work. These levels focus on production skills. Trainees are tested, again by farmers, and receive certificates before they can move on to the next level of training.

In the past, level three business training was only open to level two Green Certificate graduates. This year the course has been opened up to students outside Green Certification training. **[See separate story this issue.]**

Level three business management training is mostly off-farm, but has practical applications. "Homework", between times spent in classroom, applies to their particular business operation.

"Green Certificate graduates are in high demand throughout the agricultural industry," says Inglis. "They are often able to negotiate better salaries with their certified levels of expertise," she adds.

For more information on the Green Certificate level three farm business management training, contact the Green Certificate program office in Edmonton at 427-2171 or the Horticulture Human Resource Council office in Okotoks at 938-6643. Information is also available at Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: Erin Inglis
427-2171

Check nitrogen levels this fall

Soil nitrogen levels in your fields could be low if you've harvested a good crop, so you should do a fall soil test says an Alberta Agriculture crop nutrition agronomist.

"Because there's generally been very good crop growth across the province, chances are those crops have removed large amounts of soil nitrogen and fertilizer. As a result, low nitrogen levels may be prevalent," says Len Kryzanowski.

"We advise farmers to do soil tests annually, but they could be particularly important before seeding crops next spring," he adds.

Soil test results should show the amount of available nutrients. These include nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur. As well, basic tests also describe soil pH, salinity, texture and free lime. Additional analyses, such as for micronutrients, can also be requested.

"A soil test takes the guess work out of applying fertilizer," stresses Kryzanowski "From the analyses you can see exactly what nutrients you may need to add, or aren't necessary. While gathering soil samples takes some time, it may save you dollars when it comes to buying and applying fertilizer, and to ensure adequate amounts of fertilizer for next year."

There's another advantage to fall soil testing. "Since spring and fall sampling usually don't differ, doing a fall test gives farmers more time to analyze their fertilizer requirements," he adds.

Non-irrigated stubble and established forage crop fields can be sampled as early as mid-September. Fallow and irrigated stubble fields should be sampled in late-fall, after mid-October and before freeze-up. **[Editor's note: For more information, see story this issue on how to take soil samples.]**

For more information, contact Kryzanowski in Edmonton at 427-6361, Ross McKenzie in Lethbridge at 381-5126 or any Alberta Agriculture crop specialist through your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Len Kryzanowski
427-6361

Doing soil tests right

Soil tests must be done right to be a useful fertilizer planning tool says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The ultimate goal is accurate analyses so you can make fertilizer decisions. Accurate analyses needs three things – timing, collecting and handling fall soil samples correctly," says Len Kryzanowski, a crop nutrition agronomist.

Timing and the depth of samples depend on the type of field.

Non-irrigated and established forage crop fields can be sampled as early as mid-September. "Sampling in the zero to 15 cm depth may be adequate, however additional samples at 15 to 30 cm give a more complete overview," notes Kryzanowski.

Fallow and irrigated stubble fields should be sampled in late-fall, after mid-October and just before freeze-up. Samples should be taken up to depths of 60 cm at intervals of zero to 15 cm, 15 to 30 cm and 30 to 60 cm.

"If you're fall seeding, then testing obviously must be earlier. We recommend testing up to a month before seeding. The sample depths depend on whether the field is fallow, stubble or irrigated," he adds.

As well, sampling should be done before fall fertilizer applications to any field. Otherwise, it's hard to collect a representative sample.

Proper sample collecting has several guidelines. First, don't sample frozen or waterlogged soils. Second, samples should represent a uniform area. "You might want to size up each field before you do any sampling," he says. Experts recommend subdividing the field into different areas based on observed variations in crop growth, yield, soil texture, soil color, land slope, degree of erosion, drainage and past management.

Unusual areas should be sampled separately. These areas include back furrows, old straw, hay or manure piles, waterways, saline spots, eroded knolls and old fence rows.

"It's best to take a separate sample if the area is significantly different than the rest of the field, otherwise you may skew the overall analysis," explains Kryzanowski.

Random samples are needed from each field. Samples from about 20 to 25 places make a good composite. Depth samples should be taken at the same time as surface samples. Labs need about a pound of soil from each depth to do an analyses. However, samples from each depth must be kept separate.

The best way to handle the sample is to immediately spread it out on a clean sheet of plastic, let it air dry inside and then send it to the lab. There's an alternative. Samples can be kept for up to three days in the refrigerator before delivery to a lab.

"It's a good idea to check with individual labs to see what method they prefer," he says.

As part of sampling, each field requires an information sheet.

"You fill out the next crop you plan to grow as well as any unusual spots or problems. Send one copy to the lab and keep a duplicate for yourself," he advises.

Also, tell the lab if you've banded phosphate fertilizer. If not, test phosphorus levels will be high. The lab can adjust their recommendations if they know about the banding.

Kryzanowski recommends using a laboratory that uses soil analyses methods and recommendations based on Alberta research. Alberta Agriculture no longer does soil analyses. **[A list of Alberta laboratories follows this article.]**

For a soil sampling probe and information about soil testing, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office. Fertilizer dealers will also have information. Information is also available from Alberta Agriculture's Soil and Animal Nutrition Laboratory, 9th Floor, O.S. Longman Building, 6909-116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2.

Contact: Len Kryzanowski
427-6361

Private sector soil testing laboratories in Alberta

Brooks

Lakeside Research
Box 800
Brooks, AB T1R 1B7
Phone: (403)362-3326
Fax: (403)362-8231

Calgary

A&L Midwest Laboratories (Canada) Ltd.
2443-42 Avenue NE
Calgary, AB T2E 8A3
Phone: (403)250-3317
Fax: (403)250-5249

AGAT Laboratories
3801-21 Avenue NE
Calgary, AB T2E 6T5
Phone: (403)291-2428
Fax: (403)299-2022

Chemex Labs
2021-41 Avenue NE
Calgary, AB T2E 6P2
Phone: (403)291-3077
Fax: (403)291-9468

Edmonton

AGAT Laboratories
8740-51 Street
Edmonton, AB T6E 5E8
Phone: (403)465-0265
Fax: (403)465-2887

Chemex Labs
9331-48 Street
Edmonton, AB T6B 2R4
Phone: (403)465-9877
Fax: (403)466-3332

Plains Innovative Laboratory Services
Enviro-Test Laboratories
9936-67 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6E 0P5
Phone: (403)434-9509
Fax: (403)437-2311

Norwest Soil Research Ltd.
9938-67 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6E 0P5
Phone: (403)438-5522
Fax: (403)438-0396

Lethbridge

Norwest Soil Research Ltd.
3131-1 Avenue South
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4H1
Phone: (403)329-9266
Fax: (403)327-8527

Sandberg Laboratories Ltd.
3510-6 Avenue North
Lethbridge, AB T1J 5S3
Phone: (403)328-1133
Fax: (403)320-1033

Bringing in the veggies

Generally you can eat vegetables touched by frost, but most likely you wouldn't want to says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"Leafy vegetables such as spinach and cabbage turn limp and mushy. Frost can affect flavor, too," says Linda St. Onge.

"The changes in texture and taste usually prevent people from eating vegetables that are caught by a killing frost," she adds. "However, there is a potential – although unlikely – hazard related to nitrates in those vegetables."

Nitrogen is an essential plant nutrient. Usually, some nitrates are in plant tissue. Freezing interrupts plant metabolism and causes the nitrogen to accumulate. When humans eat those plants, bacteria in the intestine can convert nitrates into nitrites. Nitrites are toxic to humans.

Legumes, such as beans and peas, are the most prone to have extra nitrates because they fix atmospheric nitrogen and convert it into protein. However, nitrates are the step between the two.

"But frost usually does enough physical damage that the legumes lose their appeal," she adds.

"Keep in mind, unless vegetables are badly frost damaged they aren't a significant source of nitrates. And, fortunately the damage necessary to cause nitrites usually makes a plant inedible anyway," stresses St. Onge.

As well, cool temperatures before freezing weather do slow down plant growth. This means lower nitrate levels than what occur during rapid growth. St. Onge advises harvesting vegetables most susceptible to frost damage first. This includes cabbage, spinach, lettuce, corn and green or wax beans. This is especially true for any remaining second crops.

"Root vegetables are a different matter. Most can wait until after a frost. However, potatoes and carrots have noticeable flavor changes after freezing," notes St. Onge.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Horticultural business boosts at annual congress

Getting down to business is more than the annual meetings held during the Alberta Horticultural Congress, participants can also learn about business skills for their operations.

"Alberta's horticultural industry is a growing business force in the provincial economy," notes Abraham van der Breggen, the congress chair.

"Our annual congress is designed by the industry for its membership. Business management skills are just as important to success as the production, so the congress agenda reflects that," he adds.

The Alberta Horticultural Congress and associated Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show runs November 3 through 5 in Edmonton. The trade show during the first two days.

Congress keynote speaker Norine Larson focuses on one important business topic – young workers. Her keynote address is about motivating teenaged and young adult workers. Teenagers and young adults typically are the largest group of employees in horticultural industries. Larson has spent more than 20 years sharing her expertise about young workers. She presents productivity seminars and shares techniques.

Besides her keynote presentation, Larson also will lead two different seminars. One is geared to interviewing skills needed when hiring young workers, or "to get the right people – ask the right questions". She'll do this seminar twice, once on November 4 and again on November 5.

Her second seminar is related to the first. Larson will share tips in designing job advertisements to attract the type of worker you want.

One of the featured congress presentations is about the Council of Alberta Horticultural Industries. Participants can hear what the organization is and what it can do for them. As well, results of a recent provincial horticultural survey will be unveiled.

Other business-related seminar topics include: business the Japanese way; marketing your own produce to restaurants; developing a diversified customer base; what's in a label; developing and marketing new horticultural products; building gift baskets that sell; and, creating a sense of community at your Farmers' Market.

Two of the business sessions will be of particular interest to market gardeners. One is about promoting U-pick operations, the other on making your farm stand more exciting.

Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton and the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. For more information, contact Simone Demers-Collins in Edmonton at (403)422-1789 or fax (403)472-6096.

Contact: Simone Demers-Collins
422-1789

Vegetable, mineral, but no animal at Hort congress

All manner of topics vegetable plus something about the minerals in growing plants are on the agenda of the annual Alberta Horticultural Congress annual conference.

"The congress has something for everyone involved in the horticulture industry," notes congress chair Abraham van der Breggen. The eighth annual congress is November 3 through 5 in Edmonton.

The annual event is co-sponsored by five different horticultural organizations and the conference workshop agenda reflect those interests.

For example, vegetable growers – whether commercial, market garden or greenhouse – will find a wide variety of seminars at the congress. Seminar topics range through pest control to storage.

Two of the speakers are Alberta Agriculture vegetable specialists. Paul Ragan will again provide the annual Ragan Report for commercial vegetable producers as well as a session on protected vegetable cropping. Belinda Chohan will look at "solving tomorrow's problems today".

Other subjects include organic vegetable production, using biologicals for insect control and growing speciality vegetables. There'll also be a report on what an Alberta grower learned when he recently visited vegetable growers in Israel and Spain.

Especially for greenhouse growers, is a nutrition basics session covering nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. For vegetable producers, there's an in-depth look at vegetable production using rockwool or sawdust.

"Many sessions overlap areas within the horticultural industry, especially some of the business-related sessions. For example, a presentation on how to market your own produce to restaurants," notes van der Breggen.

"Congress participants also have the opportunity to take in the largest horticultural trade show in Western Canada," he adds. The Prairie West Horticultural Trade show is a joint project of the congress and the Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association. The trade show runs the first two days of the congress, November 3 and 4.

Contact: Simone Demers-Collins
422-1789

Agri-News briefs

Nominations open for Alberta Farm Woman of the Year

Nominations are open for Alberta's Farm Woman of the Year. Nominations close on November 30. The award is sponsored by the Alberta Farm Women's Network. It recognizes deserving farm women for their contributions to community, leadership in organizations, dedication to the farm community, and contributions and support of family and family farm. Nominees must be 18 years of age, live in rural Alberta and have been a resident long enough to have contributed significantly to the quality of life in rural Alberta. The nominee must agree to accept the nomination by signing a submission form. Nominators must also be 18 years old and have resided in Alberta for a least one year. Nomination submissions should include a description of the nominee's contributions and achievements. A current black and white photograph is also requested. Nominees will be recognized and the winner announced at the 5th Alberta Farm Women's Conference. For more information, contact Faye Mayberry at (403)886-4129.

Camrose Sport Horse field inspection day set for Oct. 14

The Canadian Sport Horse Association (Alberta Division) will hold a fall inspection near Camrose on October 14. The inspection station will be run out of Meadow Rose Stables west of Camrose. The inspection is open to the public starting at 1 p.m. Canadian Sport Horses are a uniquely North American performance horse of superior quality. The ideal Canadian Sport Horse is 16 hands or taller with a minimum cannon bone measurement of eight inches, and has good body substance and conformation with free flowing, supple and correct movement. Horses are measured, evaluated and graded on conformation by a panel of inspectors. Once approved, the horse is issued a certificate of identification and is on record in the Canadian Sport Horse Stud Book at the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation. Another inspection will be held in the Calgary area, but the date hasn't been set. To register for an inspection or for more information, contact Theresa Rogers in Okotoks at (403)938-5436.

Videos have tips on hiring and managing farm employees

Alberta Agriculture's central multi-media library has two additions on its shelves about farm employees. *Hiring the Right Person for Your Farm* (VT 319-28) and *Managing People on Your Farm* (VT 391-29) are both 20 minutes long. The first discusses hiring as a "matter of hats", and which one your new employee should wear. The second is a lighthearted look at interpersonal and management skills for both long-time and new farm managers. Both videos were produced by the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Both are available for loan by writing Multi-Media Library, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Getting on the information superhighway

Agriculture is on the information superhighway and cruising through its uses is just a matter of getting on the road. One way to learn the traffic rules is through a University of Alberta extension course. It's billed as the only Internet course designed specifically for people in the agricultural industry. The first "Using Internet for Communication, Research and Education in Agriculture" course runs October 28. Another course runs on January 17, 1995. The workshop introduces Internet features including electronic mail, news services, public archives and databases. File transfer, remote login and the latest Internet tools are covered. Hands-on practice is part of the course. Enrollment is limited to 24 people. To register or for more information, contact Sheila Greenberg at (403)492-3029.

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AGRI-NEWS

October 3, 1994

CANADIANA

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Advantages—and disadvantages—of fall fertilization

On the effectiveness scale, fall fertilization can range from excellent to disastrous says Alberta Agriculture's supervisor of crop nutrition.

"Effectiveness depends on soil moisture conditions, environmental conditions, type of nitrogen fertilizer used and the method of application," says Ross McKenzie.

"In other words, there are a number of factors you must consider to determine if fall fertilizing is the best option for you," he adds.

There are general rules for application methods and timing. Generally, spring banding is the most effective application method and fall broadcast is the least. Fall banded nitrogen application is as effective as spring banding, if soil isn't saturated for an extended period in the spring. And, fall banded nitrogen may be more effective than spring banded when there are poor seedbed moisture conditions.

"Those rules are based on soil biochemistry and research in Alberta," notes McKenzie. [See related story this issue.]

"You also have to consider other things when making this production management decision," he adds.

Soil tests, to at least a two foot depth, are recommended before fall fertilizing. This will help you to decide optimum rates of required fertilizer.

If you don't have soil test results before you fertilize, apply a conservative rate. This rate, say 75 per cent of the soil test recommendation, is a hedge against such things as high soil test nitrogen levels or low spring soil moisture levels. If conditions are good next spring, additional nitrogen can be added during seeding.

Third, McKenzie recommends selecting the right fertilizer formulation for your particular conditions. Generally in low risk conditions, such as in southern Alberta, anhydrous ammonia (82-0-0), urea (46-0-0), ammonium nitrate (34-0-0) or liquid nitrogen (28-0-0) perform equally well when banded.

However, higher pH soils, shallow bands and dry, cloddy soil can cause nitrogen losses through ammonia volatilization.

"If your soils tend to be saturated for a long time in the spring, avoid using nitrate fertilizers such as ammonia nitrate and liquid nitrogen," recommends McKenzie. "Nitrates are subject to both denitrification—gaseous losses—and leaching losses in wet spring conditions."

Nitrogen fertilizer should be applied in the late fall—after soil temperature drops below 7°C—for best results. The nitrification process, conversion of ammonium to nitrites by soil micro-organisms, slows down as temperature drops.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

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Method is also critical and McKenzie sums it up in three words, "Band don't broadcast." Banding restricts the contact between soil and fertilizer. This reduces overwinter losses.

McKenzie says there are at least three other management factors farmers need to think about. First, there's time management. Fall fertilizing means one less operation next spring. Second, price can be a factor. Often fertilizer prices and payment schedules tend to be more favorable in the fall than in the spring. Finally, both fertilizer and fertilizer equipment are usually more available in the fall.

For more information on fall fertilization or other soil fertility questions, contact McKenzie in Lethbridge at 381-5126, Doug Penney in Edmonton at 427-7098 or Elston Solberg at 427-2530.

Contact: Dr. Ross McKenzie
381-5126
Elston Solberg
427-2530

Doug Penney
427-7098

How nitrogen works in the soil

Plants take nitrogen out of the soil as they grow, so farmers often must replace nitrogen to grow a new crop.

For farmers, that generally means adding some form of nitrogen fertilizer to their fields. It can be animal manure, green manure or commercial fertilizer. Nitrogen fertilizers are usually applied in either the spring or the fall, and by broadcast or banding.

There are four basic types of commercial nitrogen fertilizer. They are urea (46-0-0), anhydrous ammonia (82-0-0), ammonium or nitrite.

"When and what nitrogen fertilizer should be applied depends on a lot of things, from soil moisture to the application method," says Ross McKenzie, an Alberta Agriculture crop nutrition specialist.

"Choosing the right type of fertilizer and when to apply it is based on biochemical reactions of nitrogen in the soil," he adds.

Urea and anhydrous ammonia quickly convert to ammonium. The ammonium and nitrate forms are what plants use, most prefer nitrate. If soil is warm, moist and well-aerated, ammonium is converted to nitrate nitrogen by soil micro-organisms. This is **nitrification**, a biological process performed by highly specialized soil bacteria.

Banding nitrogen fertilizer slows nitrification by creating an environment near the band where bacteria are blocked from the conversion process. "So," explains McKenzie, "if you band urea or anhydrous ammonia in the late fall, most of the nitrogen is retained in the ammonium form until the soil warms up in the spring."

On the other hand, if nitrogen fertilizer is broadcast or banded in early fall, most of the ammonium will be converted to nitrate form before freeze-up. "Twenty years of research in Alberta has shown if fall applied nitrogen is converted to nitrate before freeze-up, large losses are possible in the spring if soils are water saturated for an extended period during and just after snow melt."

The losses are caused by **denitrification**, an anaerobic—without oxygen—process. In denitrification, nitrates are converted to nitrogen and oxygen gases.

Levels of risk from over winter nitrogen losses vary by region. The greatest risk is in moister climate regions such as west central Alberta. There's lower risk in regions that tend to be drier, such as southern Alberta. Generally in those drier regions, fall banded nitrogen is equal to spring banded because of relatively low denitrification. In some cases, fall banding is superior because spring banding can cause seedbed moisture loss.

"But even in those drier regions, losses through denitrification can be higher in a wet spring," notes McKenzie. "In terms of fertilizer management, no Alberta soil type or region is 100 per cent safe when it comes to losses of fall applied nitrogen."

"However, research to understand nitrogen behavior in different soil types does give us some general rules about application methods—banding versus broadcasting—and timing—fall versus spring," he adds. **[See separate story about advantages and disadvantages of fall nitrogen application.]**

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Shelterbelt order deadline November 1

There's still time to order shelterbelt trees for planting next spring, but not much and at least two varieties are no longer available says Alberta Agriculture's shelterbelt specialist.

November 1 is the order deadline. The Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre still has the stock to fill most orders, but there are two exceptions. Northwest poplar and Scots pine are no longer available.

"We do have a supply of Brooks #6 poplar," notes Brendan Casement. "The Brooks #6 can replace Northwest poplar if drought tolerance is not the most critical consideration."

"The centre begins taking orders on June 1, so early applications are important to getting the trees you want," he adds.

Applicants can choose and buy from 26 different varieties of trees and shrubs designed to protect farmsteads and livestock enclosures. Tree seedlings are ordered in bundles of 10.

Anyone who isn't sure what to pick, can look to two Alberta Agriculture publications, *Shelterbelt Varieties for Alberta* and *Field Shelterbelts for Soil Conservation*. These publications are available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. Application forms are also available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Six selected tree seedlings for field shelterbelts are free through a federal/provincial program. To qualify, the windbreak must be at least one half a kilometre (one-third of a mile) long and be placed to protect soils or crops from wind damage. Applicants can simply

state the length of their field windbreak and nursery staff will assign the correct number of bundles.

"We're down to only five varieties because all the Northwest poplar have been allotted," notes Casement. Those five are acute leaf willow, green ash, dogwood, caragana and white spruce.

Contact: *Brendan Casement*
422-1789

Shelterbelt fields' crop yields surprise in '93

Field shelterbelts increased crop yields enough to compensate for the area taken out of production by the trees at most of the 42 sites sampled in 1993 says an Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist.

Traditionally on the Canadian prairies, shelterbelts have been planted to control wind erosion. However, farmers' and researchers' observations suggest field shelterbelts are far more than a soil conservation tool.

"With that in mind we've started to study crop yields," says John Timmermans. Alberta Agriculture staff sampled cropped shelterbelt fields in 1993 to gather tangible information on shelterbelts' other benefits.

Generally, they've found crops near shelterbelts often out-yield crops in the open field. In particular, these yields are in an area about 15 times the height of the shelterbelt.

Moisture conservation is the primary other benefit shelterbelts provide to crops. Protected areas can receive 2.5 to three times as much moisture from snow as unprotected land. Crops near shelterbelts can also benefit from increased humidity and temperature, and wind protection. In previous years' studies, as much as a 21 per cent increase in yield over the whole field was attributable to field shelterbelts.

Results from 1993 research had a bit of surprise says Timmermans. "Given 1993's weather, we didn't expect to see much effect by shelterbelts on crop yields. Below normal snowfall and wind during the winter were followed by a wet summer. We thought this moisture would negate the soil moisture and yield response we'd seen leeward of shelterbelts."

However, crop yields still increased in the protected area at most of the sites sampled. On average, shelterbelt field yields were two per cent higher than open field yields. Crop responses to shelterbelts in 1993 tended to be better in the Brown soil zone than in Dark Brown or Black soil zones.

Research related to field shelterbelts and its benefits is continuing notes Timmermans. "This fall, crop samples were taken from 70 shelterbelt protected fields throughout Alberta. The samples will be threshed and the results analyzed during the next months," he says.

Sampling the large number of fields was possible through co-operative efforts of Alberta Agriculture and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) staff.

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(403)948-8539

Site one key to successful shelterbelts

Shelterbelts can fail because young seedlings can't win the competition for moisture and nutrients against weeds says two Alberta Agriculture specialists.

"Weed control is a critical part of establishing a shelterbelt," says soil conservation specialist John Timmermans.

"To control weeds, you have to properly prepare your shelterbelt site at least a year before you plant the seedlings," adds shelterbelt specialist Brendan Casement.

The best preparation, they say, is fallowing the site the year before it's planted. "Fallowing prepares the physical soil condition, kills weeds and crop plants and helps the soil accumulate some stored moisture for the young tree seedlings to use," says Casement.

Year-before is a much better opportunity to control weeds than after planting, whether herbicides, tillage, or a combination of both are used. "Trees shouldn't be planted into sod or forage fields that haven't been summerfallowed the year before. Spring the year before," stresses Timmermans. "as fall is too late to prepare the site for planting in spring."

If the planned shelterbelt site is currently in stubble, then the planting strip can be prepared now. "However," cautions Casement, "if it's weedy, those weeds will be back next year to compete with your trees."

Trifluralin can be applied to the site at a rate two to three times the rate recommended for canola in your region he adds. "That's a general guideline, check for the exact recommended rate," he says. The trifluralin will control most annual weeds, but not winter annuals such as stinkweed, flaxweed, shepherd's purse and hawksbeard.

Their advice is to take time next spring to prepare a site for the following spring, instead of attempting to plant the tree seedlings. "The results will be much more satisfying," Timmermans says. "Especially if there's grass or hay on the site right now."

Contact: *John Timmermans* *Brendan Casement*
948-8539 422-1789

Late fall 2,4-D application makes sense

If you're searching for cheap, effective weed control or good weed control with reduced tillage, spraying herbicides in the fall could be for you.

"Fall spraying provides an excellent opportunity to control problem winter annual weeds and, potentially, perennial weeds. It fits in very well with a reduced tillage program, plus is an effective, economical way of conserving moisture," says Dan Cole, supervisor of integrated weed control for Alberta Agriculture.

"Those aren't the only advantages," he adds. "There are enough that it's well worth your time to get out the sprayer again in the fall."

One major advantage is that winter annual weeds are more susceptible to herbicides in their fall rosette stage than after they've overwintered and resumed growth in the spring. Troublesome winter annuals include stinkweed, flaxweed, shepherd's-purse and yellow whitlow-grass.

"Fall application also lets you control weeds in areas prone to wetness in the spring," Cole adds.

As well, lower herbicide rates will control winter annual weeds in the fall versus the spring. This represents a dollars savings.

"Herbicide costs, with 2,4-D amine or ester 500, will range from \$1.50 to \$2 per acre. This depends on the weed as some—such as narrow-leaved hawk's beard, common peppergrass and bluebur—require higher herbicide rates," notes Cole. "That's still probably less than fuel costs to cultivate land."

Fall spraying can save one or two tillage operations. "On summerfallow, you may not need to till or spray until the following July," he notes.

Savings also apply to moisture. "You can leave crop residue and standing stubble to protect the soil from wind and water erosion. More moisture is also conserved with less tillage and the standing stubble traps snow. As well, after using 2,4-D for weed control, there are fewer weeds to use the soil moisture," says Cole.

Research by Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge has shown this benefit. Researchers found 17 mm more water was stored on summerfallow when winter annual weeds were controlled with 2,4-D in the fall compared to early May. The extra moisture accounted for two bushels per acre more yield in the next year's spring wheat crop. The 2,4-D treatment was followed with a Rustler application in June and then tillage.

The researchers also compared fall 2,4-D application against just tillage for weed control. In that trial, they measured an average of 45 mm more stored water and a four bushel per acre yield difference on the fall-sprayed versus tillage only weed control.

Fall weed control can also save time adds Cole. "It's another way to reduce your work load during the critical spring seeding period. And, you don't have to contend with unpredictable spring weather and soil conditions."

Fall spraying also reduces the risk of herbicide injury to the next year's crop. "In other words, there's less risk of herbicide residue for the next spring's crop than if you spray in the spring," explains Cole. "Spring spraying of 2,4-D may leave enough residue in the soil to affect canola, field pea, lentil or alfalfa seeded after spraying on reduced tillage land."

A side benefit of fall spraying 2,4-D is the possible suppression of broadleaf perennial weeds such as Canada thistle and perennial sow-thistle. "However to have effective control, these perennials must be green and growing when you spray," notes Cole.

For more information, consult a crop specialist through your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Timing fall herbicide application

Fall herbicide application has bushels of benefits, but its timing can add to its effectiveness says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Applying herbicides in the fall can reduce tillage operations, provide better winter annual weed control and conserve moisture, but weather and timing are factors in achieving these results," says Dan Cole supervisor of integrated weed control at the soil and crop management branch.

His advice is to check carefully for annual weeds. They may be very small in the fall and not very noticeable. "Results will be very noticeable later. You can see how effective fall spraying 2,4-D is by comparing a sprayed area with an unsprayed area or check strip," says Cole.

"Unlike most annual and perennial weeds, winter annuals don't stop growing when there's a frost," he explains. "Spraying too early will miss weeds that emerge later if there's a long, open fall with moisture."

As weather conditions permit, 2,4-D can be applied for winter annual weed control from about October 1 until freeze-up.

"This kind of time-line means you can be patient and do the herbicide application at the right time," says Cole. "Weed growth is a consideration. Straw and chaff are other timing factors."

"The herbicide needs to hit the weeds in order to control them. Straw should be evenly spread, and spraying should wait until weeds show through the crop residue," notes Cole.

Fall herbicide application for perennial weeds such as Canada Thistle and perennial sow-thistle is a different matter he says. "It's only worthwhile spraying for perennial weeds if they are healthy and actively growing. There's a better chance of control earlier in the fall after harvest and if there's good fall soil moisture."

"Spraying for perennial weeds shouldn't be done after the first killing frost, or if a heavy frost is forecast within the week," adds Cole.

Fall herbicide application isn't a cure-all for weed problems. For example, dandelion is a hard-to-kill perennial weed when using reduced tillage. Again, plants need to be healthy and the spray applied before a killing frost. However, fall spraying usually provides better control than herbicide application at other times of the year.

Quackgrass is much the same. If actively growing in the fall, it can be controlled until the first damaging frost. Spring is potentially a better time to spray as less Roundup may be required for weed control then.

Roundup can also be used where downy brome control is a problem. This is usually on land with a history of winter wheat. Roundup has the advantage of not leaving a soil residue, so doesn't affect subsequently seeded crops.

Roundup, 2,4-D, Banvel and combinations of those herbicides are commonly used for fall herbicide application. "What herbicide you choose depends on whether the weed is annual or perennial and what crop you plan to seed the next spring," notes Cole.

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For more information, consult a crop specialist through your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

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Tender bulbs + TCL = years of enjoyment

Dig, cure and store tender flower bulbs and you can enjoy them year after year says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

The most common of these flowering summer bulbs are begonias, dahlias and gladiolus. "None of them are hardy. They're all tender and need proper handling so you can use them from year-to-year," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

"Each type of bulb requires different treatment," she adds. Begonias can be dug after the first frost, gladiolus after green leaves have changed color and dahlias after a killing frost.

Dig up begonias after the first frost. Leave tops intact and as much soil as possible as on the tubers. Store in an airy, cool location (12 to 15°C) for about three weeks until stems break off easily from the tubers. Then, clean off the soil and small roots, and dust tubers with a bulb dust fungicide such as captan. Pack tubers in slightly moistened vermiculite or peat moss and keep them at between 4°C and 10°C. "Check the begonia tubers occasionally, and if dry sprinkle them with water. You can take them out in March or April to start them," adds Barkley.

"Because dahlias often dry out during storage, wait as long as possible before you dig up their tubers," advises Barkley. "Leave them in the ground for as long as possible, but dig them up before a hard freeze that can injure roots in the soil."

After a killing frost, cut back the plant top leaving about 10 cm of stem above the soil. Dig carefully to avoid breaking the roots. After lifting, turn tubers upside down to drain water from the hollow stems. Then, remove soil carefully.

"Roots broken from the basal stem, or crown, can't be saved for replanting next year," notes Barkley.

As with begonias, dust dahlia tubers with a bulb dust and store in slightly moistened vermiculite. Store at a temperature of 4°C until April. "You should also check the tubers once and awhile. If dry, sprinkle the vermiculite with water.

"The trick to successfully storing tubers is to keep them damp enough not to shrivel, but dry enough not to sprout," notes Barkley.

There's a second method of storing dahlia tubers; dig them up but leave garden soil around the roots. "This works best with clay loam soils that don't fall apart when they dry," cautions Barkley. When the soil begins to dry and crack, sprinkle it with water.

By comparison, gladioli should be left in the ground as long as possible. "This maximizes their growing season and allows the corms to develop and mature," she says.

After digging, lay corms on the ground in the sun for an afternoon. Cut back the tops to about five centimetres above the corm top, then store in a warm, dry place—between 25° and 30°C—to cure. After two to three weeks, the old corms break off easily from the new ones. Break them off and remove any soil left on the corm.

Again, dust with bulb dust. Store corms in shallow trays, paper bags or old onion bags. Storing at a 4°C temperature helps control thrips.

Acidanthera are related to gladiolus and can be treated the same way. Acidantheras produce white or purple flowers with dark centres.

Cannas, another flowering bulb, should be dug after frost has damaged the plant. Like dahlias, turn tubers upside down for a few hours. Cure them in an airy room for several days. Then, pack into boxes of slightly moistened sand or vermiculite to prevent drying and shrinking. "As with other tubers, remember to check for dryness, and sprinkle the sand if necessary," says Barkley.

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362-3391

Dig up one bulb type, plant another

Spring and summer flowering bulbs get the opposite treatment in the fall, summer bulbs are dug for storage and spring bulbs are planted in anticipation of next spring says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Flowers can appear in your yard from very early spring until annual flowers start to bloom by using different varieties and species of fall-planted bulbs," says Shelley Barkley of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

Striped scilla, Glory of the Snow and squills all bloom very early. These bulbs produce small plants, so work well next to walkways, entrances and patios. "Some even bloom before the trees begin to leaf out," she adds.

Next to show their colors are crocus and early flowering tulips.

Mid-spring brings grape hyacinth, Darwin and Triumph tulips, Fritillarias and daffodils. Late flowering tulips and flowering onions are the last of the fall-planted bulbs to produce color in the spring landscape.

"Bulbs can be put to use in your landscape in a wide variety of ways," she notes. "Try planting fall bulbs in ribbon plantings along sidewalks, foundation plantings, in groups in front of shrubs, in rockgardens or to naturalize a piece of ground."

Another interesting way to use bulbs is to plant them among low growing juniper. "The flower will pop up above the juniper and the foliage will die back almost unnoticed," she says.

Planting two different types of bulbs at different depths in the same flower bed gives another arresting display. Darwin tulips

can be planted at 20 cm deep, then covered up with about eight cm of soil. Follow with bulbs such as Glory of Snow at a 12 cm depth. "What you'll get is tulips peaking through the ground as the Glory of Snow is in full bloom," she notes.

Naturalized plantings in turf or at woodlot edges is also easy and adds color. Gently toss bulbs out of a pail to the ground using a sweeping motion. Plant the bulbs where they fall. Some may have to be moved if they're closer than 12 to 20 cm apart.

"As well, you have to delay mowing that area in the spring. Don't mow for at least four to six weeks after the flowers fade," she adds.

Planning where you plant bulbs also takes some other considerations. Bulbs planted in the shade will bloom later and longer than those in warm, sunny places. Large group plantings are more eye catching than straight single rows. Combining colors in groups is more effective than mixing several colors in one group.

Barkley also has advice for when and how to plant bulbs. Bulbs can be planted in late summer or early fall. They have to be in the ground a minimum of 10 days before the ground freezes.

"Daffodils are earlier-the-better planted as they need time to establish roots," she says.

"It doesn't hurt to plant bulbs five to 10 cm deeper than recommended, especially if you have sandy soils," she adds.

A five cm deep mulch can be applied to bulb plantings in the fall. The mulch helps the bulbs survive the winter, but needs to be removed in the spring.

Another spring-time chore is to water the bulbs. "They are sensitive to drying during the pre-flowering period, so be sure to water them if they are dry or the flowers will blast—blossom and die very quickly or fail to bloom," says Barkley.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Getting back in touch with 4-H

You have a special skill or knowledge and you'd like to share it with a local 4-H club, but you're not sure how or where to offer you skills.

If you're in that situation, there's a weekend workshop to help you get back in touch with the 4-H movement as well as how you can assist a local club. The workshop runs October 21 through 23 at the Alberta 4-H Centre on Battle Lake.

"The workshop was developed by the West Central 4-H Alumni as a way for resource people and 4-H to find each other," notes Arron Madson, provincial 4-H personal development specialist.

Resource areas could cover the entire range of 4-H projects plus skills related to communication and other elements of the 4-H program. "That could mean sheep shearing, photography, environmental engineering, wildlife biology, cattle genetics, small engine repair, writing a speech, Parliamentary procedure—those are just a few of the possibilities," adds Madson.

The workshop is open to anyone over 18 years of age who is interested in working with 4-H clubs. Sessions cover the changing structure of 4-H, how resource people can help deliver the 4-H program, developing and practising facilitation techniques and possible areas where clubs may need guidance and support.

A \$25 registration fee covers accommodation and meals. The pre-registration deadline is October 5.

For more information, contact Shirley Dawley in Red Deer at (403)346-2523 or Karen Simpson at (403)674-4584 or (403)674-8248.

Contact: Arron Madson
(403)427-2541

Shirley Dawley
(403)346-2523

Agri-News briefs

Rescheduled "Day of the Horse" October 29

Lakeland College's Hill Equestrian Centre *Day of the Horse* open house has been rescheduled to **October 29**. This is two weeks later than the original date of October 15. The open house runs from noon to 5 p.m. and features equine information and entertainment. Demonstrations include jumping, dressage, driving heavy horses, reining, Western pleasure and junior riders. A popular feature is dog and horse jumping relays. Admission is free. This is the second open house since the facility became part of Lakeland College. The centre is located three and one-half miles south of the Lloydminster Upgrader (east of Lloydminster on Highway 16). For more information, contact Kristy Foote at Lakeland College in Vermilion at (403)853-8641 or call 1-800-661-6490 (toll-free Canada wide).

Paszkowski responds to Market Choices Alliance study

Alberta's agriculture minister has commended the Market Choices Alliance (MCA) for commissioning a report on the pros and cons of a continental barley market. The report was written and released by the George Morris Centre. "The report is very instructive and focuses on the real issues that need to be addressed," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister. "The analysis clearly shows that the benefits of allowing farmers and traders marketing choices are overwhelming and are clearly in the best interests of the grain industry." Paszkowski says this study should encourage the federal government to move quickly to open up the system by amending the Canadian Wheat Board Act during the current House of Commons session. "Quick action is essential, especially given the very visible and demonstrated dissatisfaction among farmers with the current restrictive marketing system," adds Paszkowski. The MCA includes the Western Barley Growers Association, the Western Canadian Wheat Growers, the Alberta Barley Commission and United Grain Growers. For more information, contact Doug Radke, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister, at (403)427-2145, or Dwight Dibben, the minister's executive assistant, at (403)427-2137.

Sheep seminar series November 2-5

Sheep seminars will be coming to four Alberta locations in early November. The first stop is the Lethbridge Agriculture Canada research station on November 2, followed by Olds College on November 3, Stony Plain on November 4 and the final seminar November 5 in Rycroft. For more information about the series, contact Kim Stanford, Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist in Lethbridge at (403)381-5150.

Agriculture Computer Information Fair November 3

A one-day agriculture computer information fair will be held in Lloydminster on November 3. Activities start at 10 a.m. and run through 4 p.m. The fair will be held at the Wildrose Pavilion on Lloydminster's exhibition grounds. For more information contact Chris Spasoff at Lakeland College in Vermilion at (403)853-8566 or 1-800-661-6490.

Alberta beekeepers AGM and convention November 7-8

The Alberta Beekeepers Association will hold its annual general meeting and convention November 7 and 8. The meeting will be held at the Mayfield Inn in Edmonton. For more information, contact Gertie Adair in Edmonton at (403)489-6949.

National rural restructuring conference October 12-15

The 1994 *Stimulating rural economies for the 2000s* conference will be held in Grande Prairie October 12 through 15. This year's conference theme is rural institutional restructuring. The conference is the fifth in a series organized by the Agricultural and Rural Restructuring Group (AARG) and its associated Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation. The conference will address problems and solutions being found in Canada's farming, fishing and forestry communities. In particular, the conference agenda will focus on governments, institutions, small businesses, co-operatives, volunteer organizations, health services and schools. Anyone in any of those sectors is a potential participant. For more information on the conference and registration, contact Ron Pfau at the County of Grande Prairie at (403)532-9722 or fax (403)532-4234.

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Grain and good news together again

Traditional wheat and barley producers have had little to no good news in recent years, but there is some upbeat market news this fall says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Wheat prices have been strong and the news for barley producers is much more upbeat than the situation of even a couple of months ago," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"The world wheat supply and demand situation continues to indicate the 1994-95 crop year should be a relatively good one for Canadian farmers," he adds.

In a nutshell, production estimates in major wheat growing countries have been lowered, and import estimates have jumped. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) lowered its global wheat production estimate in September by 6.5 million tonnes. The 535 million tonne estimate is close to 25 million tonnes lower than the 1993-94 world wheat crop.

A troubled Australian wheat crop is part of the good news for Canadian farmers notes Dooley. "The current forecast by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics is for a 12-year production low."

September's International Wheat Council (IWC) crop report also added to a positive wheat picture. The IWC reported a sharp reduction in global wheat ending stocks compared to their August estimate. Their estimated 107 million tonne 1994-95 ending stocks is the lowest level since 1980.

Wheat prices have been strong. December wheat futures on U.S. commodity exchanges climbed to life of contract highs. In Winnipeg, feed wheat futures made sharp gains, reflecting the much improved quality of the 1994 crop as well as general tightening of global wheat supplies.

"Tighter feed wheat supplies in Canada has also boosted western barley futures," adds Dooley. "Futures strength can also be attributed to concerns about the Australian barley crop and an optimistic outlook by many market observers.

"This is in contrast to U.S. feedgrain futures under pressure from the prospect of a huge U.S. corn crop," he notes.

Even though the U.S. corn crop is near record size, the stocks/use ratio at the end of 1994-95 is projected at under 19 per cent. The average ratio during 1990 to 1994 was 17.6 per cent.

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(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Dooley's oat outlook isn't as rosy. "Oats are probably the weak part of the feedgrain complex," he says. "There's not much left unknown on the supply side. To some degree, oats can be expected to follow the rest of the feed complex through the crop year."

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

No shortage of negative news in slaughter cattle market

Heavy carcass weight problems was one of the factors in a September slaughter cattle market plagued with negative news says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The carcass size problem got worse as producers attempted to lower their break even point by packing extra pounds on their steers," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"Previous cattle size records were smashed, producing an enormous volume of beef to be marketed," he adds.

In the markets, the impact of burdensome beef supplies was predictable—downward pressure in North American fed cattle prices. Packers paid premiums for heifers and sharply discounted overweight cattle. By mid-September in Alberta, prices below \$80/cwt. were common for heavy steers on offer.

"A 1.5 per cent climb in the Canadian dollar following the Quebec election also contributed to lower cattle prices in Alberta," notes Gietz.

Feedlot inventories remain very high compared to historical averages. Feeder cattle supplies across North America are up. "Those two facts balance out the mildly encouraging increased slaughter pace in the U.S.," says Gietz. "In other words, 1995 is still shaping up as another year of more-than-ample beef supplies," he adds.

This supply also affects the feeder cattle market. "Feeder supplies this fall are predicted to be even larger than earlier estimates," notes Gietz. During September, lack of buyer confidence contributed to a sharp price drop. In Alberta, feeder cattle prices lost up to \$15/cwt. between Labour Day and late September.

Lower feeder prices do have a glimmer of positive news for the peak calf run he says. "Break even price levels are suddenly a lot more reasonable. This should shore up demand just in time for the peak run in October and help keep prices for good quality steer calves at or above the \$110 mark."

Looking farther into the future, Gietz forecasts downward price pressure on heavy feeder cattle is likely to continue.

"Particularly," he says, "if the Canadian dollar continues on its recent upward trend." Gietz estimates heavy feeder steers could average around \$95/cwt. by late fall, with still lower prices possible in 1995.

More to rural restructuring than downsizing

A global economy has reached into the heart of rural Canada and squeezed—hard. How rural communities and their institutions have coped and created new opportunities is the subject of national conference in Grande Prairie October 12 through 15.

The conference—*Stimulating Rural Economies for the 2000s*—is the sixth in a series organized by the Agricultural and Rural Restructure Group (ARRG) that started in Regina in 1987. [See separate story on ARRG.]

"Three years ago in Camrose we examined a major characteristic of Canada's rural communities, their dependence on a single major resource industry. In 1994, the focus is on the problems and solutions of rural restructuring," says Peter Apedaile, a founding member of ARRG.

"Restructuring is much more than downsizing. It's new ways of doing business and delivering services. This conference will look at the issues, potential solutions and how some local governments, businesses and volunteer organizations are coping," adds the University of Alberta rural economy professor.

The conference opens on October 12 with a preliminary rural report card session, plus four workshops on renewal opportunities in rural Canada's social, economic and environmental fabric. The main conference starts on October 13 with presentations on the basic principles of institutional restructuring, followed by a discussion of restructuring rural municipal government and economic development programs.

Lunch includes a keynote address by Norwegian Herbjorn Johanson. He hails from a community north of the Arctic Circle that has taken an innovative approach to business development. He'll share his community's experiences.

For the second time, field trips will part of the regular conference agenda. The first afternoon will take conference participants around the Grande Prairie area to see illustrations of institutional restructuring in rural Alberta. Stops include oil, gas and forestry industries, villages and hamlets, health services, rural school districts, agriculture, an aboriginal reserve and a Hutterite community.

"Incorporating the field trip was done for several reasons," notes Apedaile. "Participants get out of the formal setting and can talk to people. They see the same things, such as community decay as they travel further away from a main centre. This also gives participants common ground to draw on through the rest of the conference."

On October 14, participants can choose to follow agriculture, forestry or manufacturing/commerce streams during the morning. In the afternoon, the focus shifts to community, volunteer and service delivery. This is followed by a discussion of political and social issues involved in rural restructuring.

In the evening, the scheduled banquet speaker is Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister.

The final day of the conference is described on the program as "synthesis". An international panel will put together impressions, ideas and strategies from their conference observations as well as their own experiences.

For more information and to register, contact the County of Grande Prairie's Ron Pfau at (403)532-9722 or fax (403)532-4234.

Contact: Dr. Peter Apedaile
(403)492-4580

Blue ribbon agriculture panel at national rural issue conference

When a national conference on rural restructuring turns its attention to the agriculture industry, a blue ribbon panel will share their experiences, ideas and views.

The agriculture session is one part of a national *Stimulating Rural Economies for the 2000s* conference in Grande Prairie October 12 through 15. Conference sessions will examine restructuring government, business, volunteer and community organizations in rural Canada.

"We're very pleased to have such a diverse and well-versed panel for the agricultural session," says Peter Apedaile, president of the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation (CRRF).

Two Alberta industry leaders are on the panel that will tackle restructuring agricultural service institutions, agricultural households and farm families, and Prairie wheat pools. Orval Sorken, current UFA president and a Grande Prairie area farmer, and Alex Graham, former president of Alberta Pool, will be joined by Jack Wilkinson, president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and Janet Perry, a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) economist.

"As well, Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister, will be the banquet speaker," notes Apedaile.

Other conference sessions include looks at restructuring in forestry, manufacturing and commerce, local government, and community, volunteer and service delivery.

The conference is the sixth in a series organized by the Agricultural and Rural Restructuring Group (ARRG) and its formalized arm, CRRF.

For more information, contact the County of Grande Prairie's Ron Pfau at (403)532-9722 or fax (403)532-4234.

Contact: Contact: Dr. Peter Apedaile
(403)492-4580

The curious, the bottom-liners —all welcome at conference

There aren't any boundaries on who might be interested in a national rural issues conference in Grande Prairie October 12 through 15.

The 1994 *Stimulating Rural Economies for the 2000s* conference is focusing on rural institution restructuring. Those institutions cover governments, corporations, small business, co-operatives, rural organizations, services such as health and education, and volunteer organizations.

Besides being rural, all have one other thing in common—making some painful and productive adjustments in response to a more global economy.

"That restructuring touches a lot of people," says Peter Apedaile, a University of Alberta rural economy professor and one of the conference organizers.

Apedaile is a founding member of the Agricultural and Rural Restructuring Group (ARRG). ARRG in turn established a more formalized identity in the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation (CRRF) two years ago. The foundation sponsors the conference.

"Because so many people are affected, this conference is open to a wide variety of people who are either curious about why rural communities struggle, or have a bottom-line interest in rural Alberta and Canada," he adds.

The list encompasses representatives of municipal government, community organizations, business and commerce, public utilities, farm co-operatives, financial institutions, agriculture, forestry, oil and gas industries, economic development programs, health services, teachers, school board members, health units, rural development specialists, agricultural extension workers, educational institutions and all types of farm and rural organizations.

"We expect conference participants will cover that broad spectrum of interests and roles. We hope there will be farmers, small business people, government officials and academics, and in meeting each other they can share both problems and solutions.

"The pressing need to restructure rural and small town institutions is persistently expressed by representatives of rural organizations and the people they represent," says Phil Ehrensaft, CRRF's research director.

"Unfortunately," he adds, "our knowledge of how rural institutions are being restructured and the relative effectiveness of different strategies for change is very thin." This conference, its five predecessors and the seventh in Quebec next year were designed to broaden that knowledge base.

Contact: Dr. Peter Apedaile
(403)492-4580

ARRG and CRRF explained

The beginning was seven years ago when a group committed to improving rural issue research and policy officially organized themselves. Five successful national conferences later, they've also established a national organization and are looking to the future.

Peter Apedaile, a University of Alberta rural economy professor, was one of the rural social scientists and policy analysts at the founding meeting of the Agricultural and Rural Restructuring Group (ARRG). He's still involved and describes ARRG as a network. This network includes researchers, representatives of rural and small town organizations and civil servants who share their learning experiences to help people in non-metropolitan regions face the challenges of global economic restructuring.

ARRG held its first national conference in Saskatoon in 1987. The Ottawa meeting in 1990 was the first *Stimulating Rural Economies for the 2000s* conference. The next year, Camrose was the first Alberta conference host.

In 1994, the conference has returned to Alberta and will be held in Grande Prairie October 12 through 15. The conference sponsor is the Canadian Rural Restructuring Foundation (CRRF). ARRG, a rural organization itself, established the incorporated society two years ago.

"It's a formalization of ARRG," says Apedaile, current CRRF president. "The foundation is a not-for-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to the service of rural Canada."

The foundation will be able to fund the research the original ARRG group saw as necessary. It's also been able to bring Canadians and their counterparts from abroad together to discuss issues and share solutions.

CRRF's research director says knowledge about how rural communities cope and effectiveness of strategies is "thin". Phil Ehrensaft also describes the need to restructure as "pressing". The Grande Prairie conference with its restructuring theme will allow people to share their experiences.

The seventh conference on rural employment planned for Coaticook, Quebec in 1995.

Contact: Peter Apedaile
(403)492-4580

pocket gopher damage and control. Pocket gophers are commonly known as moles.

"Besides the up-to-date information about control, farmers will learn more about the rodent, how it lives, why it does what it does and how to deal with that," says John Bourne, an Alberta Agriculture regional problem wildlife supervisor.

Live pocket gophers, toxicant and trap displays are part of the workshop. Weather permitting, each workshop includes a field visit. Trapping techniques and a question and answer period are also on workshop agendas.

"This is a great learning opportunity," says Bourne. "Pocket gophers, or moles, have long been a sore spot with farmers, particularly those who grow their hay. Dr. Proulx and his associates may have an answer for your pocket gopher problem."

Estimates are pocket gophers cause millions of dollars damage each year in Alberta adds Bourne. Damage includes direct loss of forage production from feeding on forage crops, shortened lifespan of hay fields, damage to tractors and harvest equipment from moles' mounds and underground tunnels, and widespread weed growth.

While the workshops are free, participants are asked to pre-register. "Please call, because if workshops should fill to maximum capacity, another workshop will be scheduled," notes Bourne.

To register for the Didsbury workshop at the 5-0 Club, contact Michelle at the County of Mountain View at (403)335-3311.

For the Lacombe workshop, call Shelley at the County of Lacombe at (403)782-6601. The workshop is at Lacombe's Legion hall.

Call Kathy at the County of Wetaskiwin at (403)352-3321 for the Gwynne workshop. It will be held at the Gwynne School.

All workshops begin at 1 p.m. and run through 4 p.m. The workshops are

co-sponsored by the Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Pest Management Alternatives Office and the Canada/Alberta Environmental Sustainability Agreement.

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Pocket gopher control workshops come to central Alberta

Current research and control techniques are two topics on the agenda of pocket gopher workshops coming to three central Alberta locations later this month.

The free-of-charge, afternoon workshops are in Didsbury on October 18, Lacombe on October 19 and Gwynne on October 20. All feature researcher Gilbert Proulx who has been investigating

Partners for life FFF conference theme

Forming new partnerships and strengthening existing ones is the theme of the 1994 Farming for the Future conference November 23 in Edmonton.

"Our program will emphasize the fundamental partnerships among consumers, processors and producers and how they work to maintain an abundant and healthy food supply," says Ralph Christian, executive director of the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute (AARI).

"Research presentations were selected to demonstrate Alberta's agriculture and food industry as a multi-strand chain linking the farm gate to the consumer. Both the success of the agricultural industry and a bountiful food supply depend on the strength of every link in that chain," he adds.

The conference will follow three threads of the chain—livestock, crop and processing. Participants will get an overview of each in an opening plenary session. Concurrent sessions focus on one of those strands and provide more detailed information on the latest research and innovations.

Five on-farm demonstration projects will also be featured. They include the agronomics of ginseng production, two beef cattle projects, market opportunities for pulses and using bees in alfalfa seed production. On-farm research projects are AARI's most direct strategy for technology transfer.

To wrap up conference sessions, Doug Radke, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's deputy minister, will discuss building partnerships in agri-food research.

The conference concludes with a banquet and features Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister, as the speaker.

Registration is limited to 350 participants. The pre-registration deadline is October 31. The \$50 conference fee covers sessions, meals and published proceedings. Conference proceedings are available on their own for \$10.

Conference brochures and registration forms are available from the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute by writing #202, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or calling (403)427-1956. They are also available at Alberta Agriculture district offices.

The Farming for the Future program was established in 1979 and the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute in 1987. The institute, a crown corporation, co-ordinates and funds agricultural research and technology transfer. In 1991, the two were merged and Farming for the Future remains a major institute program.

Contact: *Dr. Ralph Christian* *Patrick Marce*
422-1072 422-1956

New direction and chair for Alberta Grain Commission

The Alberta Grain Commission's new chair also has a new role—to tap the grass roots experience of the commission's farmer members.

Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister, announced the appointment of Ken Moholity, currently director of the department's central program support development division. The commission is an added responsibility to Moholity's current duties.

Moholity's appointment fits the provincial government's commitment to streamline costs where possible, while continuing

its support of the agriculture industry through an effective Alberta Grain Commission.

"The commission is comprised of farmer members from across the province who have many decades of farming experience among them. Joining them are representatives from Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development who are knowledgeable in policy and technical aspects of the grains and oilseeds sector," says Paszkowski. "Mr. Moholity's task will be to draw on that valuable experience to help the commission better serve Alberta's farmers."

Other commission members are: Dan Cutforth of Barons, Ray Bassett of Edmonton, Eugene Dextrase of High Level, Pat Durnin of Kathryn, Glen Goertzen of Stettler, Murray McLelland of Lacombe, Ken Motiuk of Mundare and Gil Balderston of Sexsmith.

Together, commission members will work to place greater emphasis on providing guidance to the Alberta government on issues affecting the grains and oilseeds sector. This increased emphasis reflects the importance of changes required in the way Canada's grains and oilseeds are marketed, handled and transported.

"As a former member of the commission, I feel that it can best serve the industry as a grass roots body," says Paszkowski. "The commission will work more closely with producers and will act as a strong link between farmers, the department, private sector agencies and my office."

"Eighteen years with the department have given Mr. Moholity a broad knowledge and understanding of the policy issues concerning the grains and oilseeds sector. I know the commission members will welcome his team-player approach."

"The change in the commission's direction comes at a time when the entire agriculture industry is undergoing change," Paszkowski adds. "The commission will focus on ensuring that Alberta's grains and oilseeds sector remains competitive and prosperous in today's changing global economy."

The Alberta Grain Commission, established in 1972, provides advice and recommendations to Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister about issues affecting the grains and oilseeds sector. The commission focuses on recommending policy that can help farmers maximize net income, encourage industry efficiency and facilitate trade.

Contact: *Ken Moholity* *Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus*
(403)422-9167 (403)427-2137



Fruit-flavor at annual horticultural industry congress

Current and prospective growers can learn more about producing a variety of fruits at the annual Alberta Horticultural Congress November 3 through 5 in Edmonton.

"Like other sectors of the horticultural industry, interest in fruit production is growing," says Abraham van der Breggen, the congress chair.

Specific fruit sessions include producing raspberries for the commercial market, disease and insect management of strawberries, chokecherry production, alternative bush fruits for Alberta and an overview of the University of Saskatchewan's native fruit development program.

"Fruit production information sessions are one part of a very diverse and complete program at the congress," he adds.

Congress sessions range from general business topics through to specifics for vegetable, greenhouse and market garden sectors. The keynote speaker will focus on working with teenagers and young adults.

The Alberta Horticultural Congress and associated Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show runs November 3 through 5 in Edmonton. The trade show is only November 3 and 4.

Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton and the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. For more information, contact Simone Demers-Collins in Edmonton at (403)422-1789 or fax (403)472-6096.

Contact: *Simone Demers-Collins*
422-1789

Agri-News briefs

Farmfair returns November 5

Alberta's largest livestock show and sale returns to Edmonton Northlands November 5 through 13. Cattle, horse, sheep, poultry and rabbit shows plus a variety of livestock sales are part of the action at the Agri-Com. The Country Marketplace, a country and western gift show, runs during the same time at the Sportex. Between November 9 and 13 the Canadian Finals Rodeo goes at the Coliseum. For more information about Farmfair call Edmonton Northlands at (403)471-7210.

Agri-Trade '94 November 9-12 in Red Deer

Western Canada's largest indoor farm equipment show returns to Red Deer for its 11th year November 9 through 12. Last year approximately 70,000 people attended the Agri-Trade show. The show is endorsed by the Canada West Equipment Dealers Association. For more information, contact the Agri-Trade Exposition in Red Deer at (403)347-4491.

Napoleon Bonaparte's link to sugar beets

The relationship between Napoleon Bonaparte and Canada's sugar beet industry is one of the pieces of information in *The Sweet Challenge*. The 20-minute video is available for loan from Alberta Agriculture's multi-media library. The sugar beet industry from what it is, where it came from and where's it's going is explained. The video was produced by the Canadian Sugar Beet Producers' Association in celebration of its 50th anniversary. To borrow *The Sweet Challenge*, write Multi-Media Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

October 17, 1994

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Alberta crop production down—except canola

Statistics Canada's September crop area, yield and production figures didn't have any surprises, only confirmed observations made through the crop year says an Alberta Agriculture crop statistician.

"Alberta farmers harvested much less wheat than in the previous five years, increased canola production, but overall had reduced yields," says Don Hansen of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"Although the yields are lower, the quality is higher. Both cereal and oilseed crops are better quality than last year and the previous five-year average," he adds.

Alberta's 1994 total production is estimated at 15.3 million tonnes. This includes wheat, oats, barley, rye, flaxseed and canola. "That overall figure is 2.3 million tonnes less than 1993's total and almost three per cent less than the 1989-1993 average of 15.7 tonnes," notes Hansen. [See table next page.]

"Canola, rye and durum wheat are the only crops to register increased production," he adds. Estimated canola production was set at 2.6 million tonnes, up about a half million tonnes from 1993 and 1.1 million more tonnes than the five-year average.

Preliminary durum wheat production is estimated at 680,000 tonnes, up from 1993's 544,000. Rye production increased by 28,000 tonnes to an estimated 109,000 tonnes.

"The increase in durum wheat acreage only partially offset the decrease in spring wheat. Durum wheat acreage went up an estimated 300,000 acres, but spring wheat dropped by 1.5 million acres," notes Hansen.

"While the total of all crop acreage was up slightly from both last year and the five-year average, average yields were down accounting for the decreased production," says Hansen.

Preliminary yield estimates indicate 1994 crop yields were all below 1993 averages. Some were around the five-year yield average. Oats, barley and rye estimates are slightly better than the five-year average, while canola and flaxseed are off marginally from the longer-term average.

Barley production also dropped by nearly 800,000 tonnes to a total of 5.6 million tonnes. "Lower yields contributed to the drop, as it's estimated the same number of acres, 4.5 million, were

harvested," says Hansen. "However 1994 average yield was set at 56.7 bushels per acre, well under last year's average of 64.4 bushels per acre."

Statistics Canada's September 1994 *Production of Principal Field Crops* estimates were released on October 6.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

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Alberta Major Crop Area, Yield and Production

	Area ('000 acres)			Yield (bushels/acre)			Production ('000 tonnes)		
	89-93 Avg.	1993r	1994p	89-93 Avg.	1993r	1994p	89-93 Avg.	1993r	1994p
Wheat									
Spring Wheat	6,877.0	6,800.0	5,300.0	34.4	39.5	34.9	6,304.9	6,994.3	4,939.7
Durum Wheat	724.0	500.0	800.0	33.1	40.0	31.3	633.6	544.3	680.4
Winter Wheat	105.0	90.0	80.0	35.6	42.9	37.3	96.1	81.6	76.2
Total Wheat	7,706.0	7,390.0	6,180.0	34.3	39.6	34.5	7,034.6	7,620.2	5,696.3
Oats	1,190.0	1,200.0	1,200.0	63.9	79.2	68.3	1,175.8	1,465.1	1,264.6
Barley	4,820.0	4,500.0	4,500.0	55.4	64.4	56.7	5,804.6	6,314.0	5,552.0
All Rye	120.0	80.0	120.0	32.7	40.0	35.8	95.3	81.3	109.2
Flaxseed	79.0	60.0	65.0	21.8	26.7	21.5	42.9	40.6	35.6
Canola	2,914.0	3,600.0	5,000.0	23.5	25.9	23.0	1,553.5	2,109.2	2,608.2
Total	16,829.0	16,830.0	17,065.0				15,706.7	17,630.4	15,265.9

r - Revised; p - Preliminary;

Source: Statistics Canada's September Estimate

Hansen notes Alberta Agriculture hasn't finalized any quality estimates, however Alberta Pool reports higher quality. For example, 46 per cent of this year's hard red spring crop is forecast to grade number one compared to only four per cent in 1993. There were be more number one canola, too. The Pool estimates 90 per cent of the 1994 crop will be top grade. The 1993 percentage was 68.

For more information on 1994 Alberta crop production, call Hansen in Edmonton at (403)427-4011.

Contact: Don Hansen
(403)427-4011

Don't light up this fall

Stubble, straw and chaff are trash, but shouldn't be treated like garbage says a regional soil conservation co-ordinator.

"There are practical, profitable and environmentally friendly ways to deal with crop residue that making lighting it up, or burning, unnecessary," says Ben Froebel.

"Most farmers now recognize this trash is a valuable resource with multiple benefits," he adds.

One of those benefits is preventing erosion. Crop residue forms a protective barrier between the soil and the forces of wind and water.

Retaining moisture is another advantage. In dry areas, snow trapped by standing stubble renews soil moisture reserves. Soil water evaporation is also reduced by the residue cover.

Crop residues are the main source of soil organic matter. Increased organic matter levels improve soil structure. This

permits better plant rooting, more water infiltration and increased water holding capacity.

Straw contains essential crop nutrients. "Those nutrients are valued at between \$15 and \$20 per acre," says Froebel. "Burning destroys most of those nutrients, so burning can increase fertilizer costs."

"This good trash also aids growing plants in the next spring," adds Froebel. Stubble creates a microclimate to shelter emerging spring seedlings. A thatch layer of straw between crop rows will suppress weed growth.

"The final benefit of unburned residue is that it doesn't produce smoke and the problems of reduced visibility on roads and discomfort for people with respiratory problems," he notes.

"Most people burned residue because they thought it interfered with good seed bed preparation. But there are alternatives to burning that will still let you ready your field for seed and fertilizer placement," explains Froebel. The most economic method is equipping combines with choppers and spreaders. This distributes straw and chaff evenly.

Other options include baling, chaff wagons, harrows and mowing. Chaff wagons have the side benefit of removing some weed seeds.

Oscillating harrows are especially effective in dry conditions.

Stiff-toothed and long-tine harrows also get the job done. Rotary harrows aren't generally recommended because they won't move straw more than three feet. However for heavy straw, rotary harrows won't plug or bunch. Some fall tillage will also be necessary to incorporate heavy straw.

Mulching with a rotary or flail mower is also effective. "But it's an expensive option," notes Froebel. "There's a high power requirement and an extra field pass."

For more information about conserving crop residue and seed bed preparation, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Ben Froebel
(403)674-8305

Positive news pervades pea market

Canadian pea growers not only produced a record crop, they also have some positive signals in the pea market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Dry pea production is estimated at close to 1.4 million tonnes this year says Matthew Machielse of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"The good news is that our major competitors, Australia and Turkey, have had very poor crops and will likely only export small quantities, if any, peas," he notes.

Yellow edible pea varieties should have good selling opportunities in India. "This is because our split yellows are interchangeable with traditional Turkish chick peas," says Machielse.

"The U.S. is likely Canada's only significant competitor in many markets," he adds. "The U.S. has also come out aggressively on PL 480 dry pea food aid tenders."

The U.S. food aid September-November tender is more than double last year's level. These tenders provide an alternative market for lower quality green peas and also removes them from the competitive export market.

The European feed pea export market is also holding up well says Machielse. "Given the large Canadian supply, we will have to maintain the steady export pace set in the first half of 1994 in order to prevent stock level increases.

"Continued use by the EC feed compounders to use domestic feed grains is keeping demand up for protein substitutes," he adds. "The falling U.S. corn price is likely going to force increased use of imported corn gluten down the road and slow protein demands in the EC."

Supply won't be a problem in Canadian special commodity markets in 1994. Average to above average yields are estimated across the Prairies. Record dry pea, lentil, canary seed and mustard production is expected.

Contact: Matthew Machielse
(403)427-5387

Hog producers face months of low prices

Hog prices will remain under pressure through the fall and winter says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"With the U.S. herd on an expansion course and peak marketing hitting its stride, prices could remain under pressure for several months," says Ron Gietz, of the market analysis and statistics branch.

Gietz projects monthly Index 100 hogs prices in Alberta to average \$1.15/kg (dressed) through October and November. His December forecast is at \$1.10 and January 1995 at \$1.05. His projected March price is back to the \$1.15 level. All forecasts are based on a 74.5 cent Canadian dollar compared to its U.S. counterpart.

"Local producers have the additional worry of the Canadian exchange rate," he says. "Any resumption of an uptrend in our dollar would have negative price impacts for all Canadian producers."

Following a disastrous September for North American slaughter hog prices, Gietz says markets are most likely to take their cue from the actual pace of hog slaughter and pork production, rather than the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) September 1 hog inventory report released on September 29.

"This late August into September adjustment was market reaction to finally being convinced the USDA June hog report was correct and large pork supplies were coming for many months," explains Gietz.

A protracted period of hog prices below \$40/cwt. in the U.S. could speed restructuring of the hog industry he adds. "Many smaller producers will probably leave the industry. New, larger units will likely tough out the current price downturn.

"Depending on the industry adjustment to lower prices, U.S. expansion could end as early as this winter, bringing a cyclical upturn in prices—perhaps as soon as late 1995," says Gietz.

U.S. plants surpassed a two million hog slaughter kill mark for one week in late September. "This estimated weekly kill was the largest since April 1980. Packers loved it, but it's a negative as far as producers are concerned," notes Gietz.

Alberta's September market featured a sharp decline in board marketings, about 74 per cent of year-ago levels. Those numbers were in sharp contrast to Statistics Canada's inventory estimates that indicate a stable to slowly growing Alberta swine herd.

Contact: Ron Gietz
(403)427-5376

Harvest weather story same for September

Alberta's September weather continued August's warm trend, but was drier than the previous month says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"It was another great month of harvesting weather," says Peter Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch. "Even the frost was later than usual."

"Alberta's average temperature was 2.8 degrees above normal and total precipitation 40 per cent below normal," he adds. These averages are based on data recorded at 59 Environment Canada climate stations across the province.

The climate stations averaged 26.6 mm of precipitation, 17.4 mm below the 1961 to 1990 September average. Most of the Peace region and central Alberta received precipitation amounts below to near normal. Two exceptions were Red Deer and Elnora, reporting respectively 78.1 mm and 79.2 mm. Those were the highest totals among all the stations.

Most of southern Alberta was dry. Values of September rain between 10 mm and 20 mm were common, about 20 to 75 per cent below normal. The driest areas of the province were located south of Calgary to Claresholm and east to Empress where less than 4.0 mm of rain was reported.

"September did begin with stormy cool and wet weather," notes Dzikowski. "Sunny, warm weather returned to most of Alberta for the next two weeks. Record high temperatures were set in southern and central Alberta during the last week of September. Crops dried quickly with warm temperatures which helped harvest progress."

The first widespread frost occurred on September 20, about 10 to 20 days later than the average first fall frost date. Temperatures dropped to between -2 to -4°C.

"This frost was followed by warm, dry weather until the end of the month," he adds.

The average monthly temperature for September was 13.2°C. The normal temperature for the same 59 stations in September is 10.4°C. Most Alberta locations reported temperatures 1.5 to 4 degrees above normal.

The coldest monthly average in Alberta was High Level's 9.1°C. "But that was still almost one degree above normal," he notes.

Aden reported a 16.4°C average, 3.7 degrees above normal, the warmest monthly average temperature in the province.

However, this ideal harvest weather September was followed by an early October winter snow storm in southern Alberta. About 20 to 50 cm of snow was reported across the south. The greatest amounts of snow fell on the Milk River Ridge and in Waterton National Park.

"The storm wasn't as bad as it could have been with the bulk of harvest already complete," explains Dzikowski. "With temperatures expected to rise, most of the melting snow will go directly into the soil, and help replenish soil moisture reserves."

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
(403)422-4385

Sheep seminars start off November

An Alberta Agriculture sheep seminar will be in four communities on successive days in early November.

The 1994 Sheep Seminar series is at the Lethbridge research station on November 2, Olds College on November 3, Stony Plain on November 4 and Rycroft on November 5.

"We've tried to include the whole province in our seminar series this year. This is the first time we have gone north into the Grande Prairie region," says Kim Stanford, provincial sheep specialist in Lethbridge.

"Each seminar features the same speakers and topics," she adds. Two speakers are from the U.S., another is an Agriculture Canada researcher and the fourth an Alberta rancher.

Janice Grauberger, of the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI), will discuss the future of the U.S. sheep industry after the wool incentive and changes to federal grazing fees. The lean gene and other recent developments in lamb carcass quality is Gary Snowden's topic. Snowden is from the U.S. sheep experimental station in Dubois, Idaho.

Tim McAllister, a Lethbridge-based Agriculture Canada researcher, will talk about care and feeding of sheep's rumen microbes.

Grazing sheep to improve range is the subject Rick Neville will discuss. Neville's Glenfiddich Ranch is near Lundbreck.

A \$5 fee is payable at the door. For more information, contact Stanford in Lethbridge at (403)381-5150 or Wray Whitmore in Edmonton at (403)427-5083.

Contact: Kim Stanford
(403)381-5150

Wray Whitmore
(403)427-5083

Namesake to present outstanding ag ambassador awards

Three Lethbridge area teachers will receive awards recognizing their outstanding agricultural awareness initiatives tomorrow (October 18).

Daryl Chichak, an Edmonton teacher, as the award's first recipient became its namesake. He'll make the presentations to Robert Findlay, Paul Liska and Carol Beswick at Alberta Pool's Lethbridge office at 4:30 p.m.

"These awards are an acknowledgment of teachers who are superior agricultural ambassadors," says Cindy Dixon of Alberta Agriculture who co-ordinates the Agricultural Ambassador project.

"We're proud of how successful the Agricultural Ambassador program has been, and particularly delighted with the innovative

and wonderful ways Alberta teacher's have brought agriculture into their classrooms," says Jim Hahn, of Alberta Pool. Alberta Pool is the ambassador program's primary sponsor.

Liska and Findlay created a three-year agricultural program for Hutterite schools. They describe their program as a practical and relevant agricultural option for Hutterite students at the junior high level. Successfully field tested in the counties of Lethbridge, Willow Creek and Warner, the program is currently being used by teachers in this tri-districts area.

Carol Beswick of Magrath is the other honoree. A student competition involving Lethbridge's annual Ag Expo and a local newspaper was one of her projects. Through the **Lethbridge Herald**, students were sent on a scavenger-type hunt to find certain items and information at the agricultural fair.

All the awardees share a common bond. Each, as did Chichak, attended the Agricultural Education Awareness Institute. The institute has been offered every summer since 1990. It's a full-credit, university level course with hands-on experience in Alberta's agriculture and food industry.

"The tremendous knowledge base created at the institutes and through teacher agricultural ambassadors in Alberta schools has certainly added an important perspective for young Albertans. But we also feel it's important to give credit to the teachers who go that extra distance to put agriculture into their classrooms, and give a little incentive at the same time," says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture agricultural awareness specialist and co-ordinator of Alberta's Agriculture in the Classroom program.

Gabert adds award winners don't have to be Institute grads, but winners so far have been "ideal grads", designing unique programs and firing up their colleagues to incorporate agriculture into their classes. "It's not necessary for an agricultural ambassador to make dramatic changes. They may be that persistent silent partner who keep the embers glowing," she says.

For more information about the Daryl Chichak Award, the Agricultural Ambassador program, the Summer Agricultural Education Institute or the Agriculture in the Classroom program, contact Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2402.

Contact: **Betty Gabert**
(403)427-2402

Cindy Dixon
(403)427-2402

Greenhouse topics on hort congress seminar agenda

From how to start in the greenhouse business to the top 20 propagation secrets, greenhouse growers will find specific topics related to their business at the eighth annual Alberta Horticultural Congress November 3 through 5.

The congress also has an associated trade show on November 3 and 4. The The Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show is co-sponsored by the congress and the Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association (LANTA). All the events and activities are at the Mayfield Inn and Trade Center in west Edmonton.

"The congress offers education seminars for professional, commercial and beginning horticulturists of all types," notes congress chair Abraham van der Breggen.

That includes vegetable, fruit and greenhouse growers, as well as florists. The trade show features the latest in commercial, technical and other trade items.

Specific greenhouse related seminar topics are: the start up of and making a greenhouse business; nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus nutrition basics for both beginner and experienced growers; temperature and light effects on plant growth; and, the top 20 propagation secrets of annuals.

"Greenhouse growers will also find a variety of other sessions of interest related to business, promotion and industry trends," adds van der Breggen.

Keynote speaker is Norine Larson, a teenage productivity expert, who has spent 23 years working with young adults. Among her clients is McDonald's, the fast-food restaurant chain. The horticultural industry typically uses young adult and teen employees. This group doesn't act or react like older employees. Larson's presentations are geared to help employers understand young employees and vice-versa.

For more information about the congress, contact Simone Demers-Collins at 422-1789, or about the trade show, contact LANTA at 489-1991.

Contact: **Simone Demers-Collins**
(403)422-1789

Flowery touch in hort congress educational seminars

Geraniums, dried flowers, and wild flowers are among the bouquet of sessions at the annual Alberta Horticultural Congress November 3 through 5 in Edmonton.

"The flower sector is growing in a number of ways and our sessions reflect that diversity," says Abraham van der Breggen, the congress chair.

Specific sessions include geranium varieties and production; selling dried flowers co-operatively; so you want me to buy your drieds; native wild flowers and grasses; designing with freeze dried flowers; color trends for 1995 and tying in color to sales; and, the top 20 propagation secrets in annuals production.

"The congress is unique because of the consistently high level of input from Flowers Canada membership in Alberta," he notes. "Individuals such as Carol Davies Pedersen of Camrose and Bonnie Mieske of Wetaskwin take the opportunity to demonstrate the floral industry's talents."

Those demonstrations include arrangements for each session room and the congress opening ceremonies. In 1993, the opening ribbon was a 20 inch long carrot from Brooks. Rumours are zucchini may be involved in the 1994 opening.

Congress sessions range from general business topics through to specifics for vegetable, greenhouse and market garden sectors. The keynote speaker will focus on working relationships with teenage and young adult workers.

The Alberta Horticultural Congress and associated Prairie West Horticultural Trade Show runs November 3 through 5. The trade show is only November 3 and 4. All activities are at the Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre.

Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton and the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. For more information, contact Simone Demers-Collins in Edmonton at (403)422-1789 or fax (403)472-6096.

Contact: *Simone Demers-Collins*
(403)422-1789

Agri-News briefs

October is honey month in Canada

The Canadian Honey Council is saluting the work of the nation's 13,000 beekeepers and the industrious honeybee during October. Alberta is Canada's largest honey producer. In 1993 some 800 Alberta beekeepers produced 24 million pounds of honey valued at \$14 million. The national council offers a number of resources at a small fee. They range from recipe booklets to a teacher resource kit on bees and honey production. For more information, call toll free 1-800-6NECTAR [1-800-663-2827].

Dairy showcase returns to Red Deer Westerner Nov.1-2

The third Westerner Fall Dairy Showcase runs November 1 and 2 at Westerner Park in Red Deer. Ayrshire and Jersey breed shows, plus a junior show, are all the first day. The second day has a Holstein show and sale. There are also education seminars on the first day of the showcase. Andrew Johnson, a mastitis control expert from Wisconsin, will discuss increasing profits through healthy udders. Johnson specializes in milking equipment and procedures, stray voltage and the cow's environment. In the morning session, his focus is on procedures and mastitis, shifting to dairy equipment in the afternoon. Recently, Johnson helped develop a new method for testing milk systems in the U.S. Registration for these sessions are required by calling the Western office at (403)343-7800 by October 28. For more information, contact show chairman Wayne Van Sickle at (403)227-2624, or Westerner events co-ordinator Kristine Smith at (403)343-7800.

4-H leaders go south for sharing

Eight Alberta 4-H leaders went south to join over 150 4-H leaders from Montana at that state's annual leaders' forum October 13 through 15. They are Darrel Neal of Lacombe, Linda Foster of Westlock, Bert Pringle of Didsbury, Grace Melowsky of Waskatenau, Margaret Mackoweki of St. Paul, Joan Hadwin of Consort, Alberta Vigen of Coronation and Susan Hager of Hayter. All were selected by regional 4-H councils. They took part in education workshops, shared information with Montana leaders and learned new skills to use at home. "Our leaders have been making this trek for 20 years through the sponsorship of Alberta Power and TransAlta Utilities," notes Marguerite Stark, provincial 4-H programs specialist. For more information, contact Stark in Airdrie at (403)948-8510.

Canadian Wagyu 3rd annual meeting November 17

The Canadian Wagyu Association will hold its third annual general meeting November 17 in Calgary. Agenda topics include registry procedures, an Agriculture Canada Wagyu crossbreed evaluation, practical management of Wagyu cross breeds meat quality and parentage verification. In the business portion of the meeting, election results will be announced and the national board of directors will hold its meeting. An evening banquet is also a fund raiser. The banquet is also an opportunity for many industry newcomers to taste Wagyu beef. For more information, contact managing director Marcel Morin in Calgary at (403)289-5381.

Provincial dairy awards of distinction recipients named at showcase

Two prominent Alberta dairymen will be honored with provincial awards of distinction during the Westerner Dairy Showcase in early November. The recipients, Leonard Wylie of Calgary and Gordon Patriquin of New Sarepta, will be the guests of honor at a wrap-up banquet on November 2. Both were nominated by their peers, Wylie by the Alberta Ayrshire Club and Patriquin by the Northern Alberta Holstein Club. Wylie is a second generation dairyman who progressed from milking by hand to current technologies. An active member of both provincial and national Ayrshire organizations, Wylie has continued his involvement with those organizations although he retired from active dairy farming in 1991. His Heather Grove Farm has also excelled in the show ring. Patriquin is known for his ability to select top quality dairy cattle for his Provincial dairy awards of distinction recipients named at showcase farm and as a judge. The Patriquin family started with ROP and Holstein Canada Classifications of their animals in the 1950s. Raydon Holsteins have been show winners in Western Canada, Toronto and the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin. He has promoted the Holstein breed both provincially and nationally. Although the Raydon milking herd was sold in 1986, Patriquin is still involved with marketing bred and open Holstein heifers. For more information about the provincial awards of distinction, contact Kristine Smith at the Westerner at (403)343-7800.

Peace farm women's conference celebrates farm families

Celebrating farm families is the theme of the 1994 *Peace Region Farm Women's Conference* in Peace River November 17 and 18. Registration is limited to 120, so anyone interested is encouraged to register early. The deadline is November 1. Forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices. A total of 16 select-a-sessions allows participants to make their own program. Topics include secrets of strong families, keeping kids safe, farm yard facelifts, grain market management, not all farmers grow wheat, off-farm investments, communication with confidence and will it work on my farm. For more information, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office in the Peace region.

Emu extravaganza in Edmonton October 22

The Alberta Emu Association presents *Emu Extravaganza* October 22 at Edmonton's Mayfield Inn. The agenda includes presentations from established producers in Spokane, a beginner's session, Alberta Agriculture's Detlaf Onderka on research and marketing, a ratites veterinarian and processing. Each session is followed by a question and answer period, plus all the speakers will be part of a wrap-up panel for questions and answers. A trade show is also part of the day's activities. For more information, contact Carol McAllister in Blackfoot at (403)846-2225.

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October 24, 1994

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1994 weather provided good growing conditions

Growing season weather was kind to most Alberta farmers in 1994 says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"The total May through September precipitation was near normal and the average temperature was one degree above normal," notes Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch. The averages are based on data recorded at 59 Environment Canada climate stations across the province.

"Generally, agricultural areas got the weather they needed in the order they needed. Weather dry enough to get into the fields to seed crops, followed by good May and June moisture. Heat followed to mature crops, and finally came ideal harvest weather, so most farmers finished early," he adds.

The 1994 growing season had a positive start with good soil moisture reserves after a wet fall in 1993 followed by a cold, snowy winter. March and April were warm and dry, allowing an early start to spring seeding. The exception was southern Alberta, where dry seed bed conditions delayed seeding, especially of canola.

May and June brought two months of above normal precipitation. "Moisture conditions looked good for most of Alberta's crops with that rain, although haying was difficult in wetter areas," says Dzikowski. Alberta's climate stations averaged 57.9 mm of precipitation in May, 12.9 mm above the 1961 to 1990 average.

"June was also wet which lessened any concerns about lack of moisture," he adds. The climate stations averaged 80.0 mm of precipitation, 6.8 mm above average. Most of Alberta received above normal precipitation, except for the far north and parts of southern Alberta.

July was hot and dry in Alberta, the opposite of June. "The average temperature was about one degree above normal, adding on the equivalent of three extra days worth of heat to the growing season," he notes.

There was also a lot of variability in rainfall amounts over short distances because of showery rain patterns. Most of southern and central Alberta received rainfall amounts 40 to 80 per cent below normal. In the south, between 10 and 20 mm of precipitation were common, as were values between 40 to 70 mm in central regions.

"The Peace region was an exception," he adds. Above normal July rainfall amounts of 70 to 100 mm were reported. Peace River was the highest with 115.5 mm.

August continued the warm trend, although temperatures were only about one half a degree above normal. That meant generally good heat for crop development was provided. While conditions were a little wet in central Alberta, the far north and south were

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dry. Those regions received less than half of their normal August rains. High Level got only 0.4 mm of the 56.2 mm average for August. Between 10 mm and 40 mm of rain were common in southern Alberta.

"Even a stormy cool and wet start to September didn't dampen the overall season weather picture," says Dzikowski. "The wet weather didn't delay harvest. Crops dried quickly with warm temperatures, also helping harvest progress. The balance of September was warm and dry with the average temperature 2.8 degrees above normal and total precipitation 40 per cent below normal.

There were regional variations. Most of the Peace and central Alberta received precipitation amounts below to near normal. Most of the south was dry, reporting precipitation totals 20 to 75 per cent below normal, or between 10 mm and 20 mm.

"Even the frost was late," notes Dzikowski. The first widespread frost occurred on September 20, about 10 to 20 days later than the average first fall frost date. Temperatures dropped to between -2 to -4°C.

The frost was followed by warm, dry weather until the end of the month. Record high temperatures were set in southern and central Alberta during the last half of September.

For more information, contact Peter Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
(403)422-4385

Alberta Agriculture minister heads delegation to Eastern Europe

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister will return from a 10-day trade mission to Russia and Poland later this week (October 27).

Walter Paszkowski began the mission by heading a Canadian delegation at a two-day federalism seminar in Moscow. The seminar is part of the Russia-Canada Federalism project organized by the provincial Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs (FIGA).

"At the same time, we want to look at new markets and opportunities developing throughout the world. Although Russia has been a long-standing purchaser of commodities such as wheat, there will be new opportunities due to the improved economic situation, particularly western Canadian food market opportunities," said Paszkowski as he left on the trade mission on October 17. "We are attempting to identify opportunities consistent with Alberta's strengths," he adds.

Alberta's known strengths are in field crops such as canola. The mission will examine opportunities for co-ordinated efforts in manufacturing canola into biodegradable oils and greases. Poland is already establishing its place in this type of technology.

"We see opportunities for major projects that could include environmental issues and corrective measures, particularly on rehabilitation resulting from strip mining. This area has been of particular interest to Poland at present," notes Paszkowski.

Opportunities in meat products will also be looked at as Russia and Poland progress more towards a free-market system. "It's important these markets be developed," he says, "because as the economies of the Eastern Block nations become more market-driven, people will seek more Western food products like Alberta's high-quality meat products."

Media inquiries are welcome at Paszkowski's Edmonton office. The minister will provide trade mission updates as each stage of the mission is completed.

Contact: Dwight Dibben
(403) 427-2137

Normal precautions, good hygiene when controlling mice

Normal handling precautions and good hygiene when cleaning up from or disposing of mice are how rural Albertans can protect themselves from any diseases the rodents may carry says an Alberta Agriculture problem wildlife specialist.

"Wear a dust mask or a mask with air filter if you're sweeping out where mice have been," recommends Mike Dorrance. "Don't drink, eat or smoke before you clean up, a similar routine to what's recommended when working with pesticides."

Hygiene is also important when removing a dead mouse from a trap. "One easy way is to put a plastic bag over your hand, then remove the mouse from the trap and bring the bag up over your hand to enclose the mouse.

Even after taking this precaution, follow any handling with washing your hands he adds.

Some sort of control comes before actually handling dead mice or doing a clean-up of where mice have been. "Mouse proof your house," advises Dorrance.

This means closing up all cracks and openings bigger than one-quarter inch or seven millimetres. Inside houses, Dorrance recommends using traps to catch mice.

Traps can also be used in garages and out buildings. An anticoagulant rodent poison is another alternative. There are a number of anticoagulants available on the market. Active ingredients to look for are chlorophacinone, diphacinone, bromodiolone and brodifacoum.

Dorrance also has two cautions. Don't use Warfarin rat poison. "Rats and mice don't have the same feeding behavior, so a rat poison is less effective on mice because they are nibblers and not regular feeders," he says. "Poison baits must be accessible to mice, but not to dogs, cats and children." Anticoagulant poisons are described in the *Blue Book*, Alberta Agriculture's Guide to Crop Protection with Chemicals.

Contact: Dr. Mike Dorrance (403)422-4844

Identifying three common mice species

Three mice species are commonly found in Alberta around houses and other buildings.

They are the deer mouse, house mouse, and meadow vole or field mouse. Recently, deer mice have been linked to a deadly virus known as hantavirus. The virus can be passed to people who breathe in dust from dried mouse droppings and urine.

"Deer mice are somewhat easier to identify than the other two species," says Mike Dorrance, an Alberta Agriculture problem wildlife specialist.

Deer mice are bi-colored with white on the bottom and brown/grey on the top. Even their tails' undersides are white. Deer mice also have large eyes and ears. Their tails are as long or longer than their body. They are seed eaters.

The meadow vole, or field mouse, is a darker color and has a shorter tail than the deer mouse. The vole has very small ears and beady eyes. Its tail is shorter than its body. They eat vegetation and often leave trails through lawns in the spring.

The common or house mouse is greyish or brown in color. It eats anything.

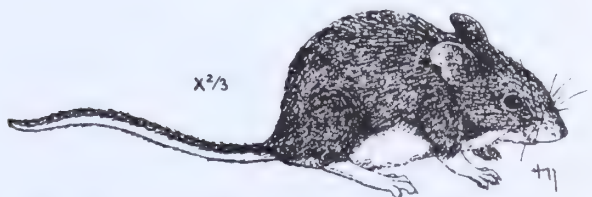
As far as size goes, all three mice species are about the same size. Adults vary between about seven and 10 cm long.

"Probably most people couldn't identify which of these mice species they've seen unless they've caught one in a trap. This reinforces the need to take care whenever you're handling mice.

"Right now there's a focus on a particular species because of a specific virus, but people should take precautions and practice good hygiene when dealing with any type of mice," adds Dorrance.

Contact: Dr. Mike Dorrance
(403)422-4844

Deer Mouse



Natural horn fly predators found, to be researched

Natural predators of a major economic cattle pest have been identified in Alberta says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"In a preliminary survey in selected pastures in the Two Hills, Brooks and Nanton areas we found eight species of dung beetles that feed on cattle dung and on eggs and larvae of horn flies," says Ali Khan, livestock pest control specialist.

Horn flies cause millions of dollars of damage if left untreated. Alberta producers lose an estimated \$43 million dollars annually.

Dung beetles feed on horn fly eggs and larvae. As well, they feed on or bury internal parasite eggs by scattering dung and burying dung to make brood balls for their young. Not only are these beetles horn fly predators, they also compete with horn flies by breeding in the same habitat.

"For the last 50 years, chemical control has been used. Researchers are turning more to biological controls, particularly those that are sustainable in pasture conditions," notes Khan. "Australia and the U.S. have already had some success.

"The presence of dung beetles here in Alberta suggests we might be able to make better use of biological control here," he adds. "But we need to know more before we can go ahead."

So Khan, along with department beef specialists, will do an inventory of predatory beetles found in cattle dung during the summer of 1995.

Six of the eight species found in this year's preliminary survey aren't native to Canada. "We're guessing they were introduced to North America from Europe the same way horn flies were in the late 1800s," he notes. "The beetles co-existed with cattle dung in Europe and joined their prey in the new world."

The two native dung species have adapted to feeding on cattle dung, and perhaps used to feed on buffalo and deer feces. They too feed on and compete with horn flies in cattle manure.

Australia and the U.S. successfully introduced new and exotic dung beetles from Europe, Africa and India to reduce horn fly breeding in cow dung. California, Texas and Oklahoma are three states that have effectively established dung beetles as a biological control agent.

Contact: Dr. Ali Khan
(403)427-5083

1994 ag software directory available

Over 770 different agricultural software packages are listed in Alberta Agriculture's 1994 *Agricultural Software Directory*.

The directory has been updated and published since 1985. It's available in two forms—a hard copy booklet and on an electronic bulletin board. Booklets are available free of charge from all Alberta Agriculture district offices, or by writing Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

"We also maintain an electronic version on the FBMinet bulletin board," notes Bruce Waldie, a management technology specialist at the Olds-based farm business management branch.

"The electronic version is more current than any printed publication can be," he adds. FBMinet's two Alberta numbers are (403)556-4104 in Olds and (403)438-2209 in Edmonton. For more information, contact Waldie, the Alberta system operator at (403)556-4243.

Over 130 different manufacturers products are listed in the directory. "Companies can, and are encouraged, to provide us with information about their specific software," says Waldie. Listings are free.

"Maintaining the agsoft database has also given us significant insight into the agricultural software industry," he adds. "Most recently we've seen the trends into more enterprize specific record keeping." [See separate story this issue.]

Agricultural software can be divided into four basic categories: financial, physical, analysis/planning and process control.

Contact: Bruce Waldie
(403)556-4243

Farmers moving beyond basic record keeping software

As farmers become more familiar and confident with using computer software for basic record keeping, many move on to more sophisticated software business tools.

That observation is from Bruce Waldie, a management technology specialist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds. Waldie has maintained an agricultural software database since 1985. He's also one of the founders and the Alberta system operator of FBMInet, a national bulletin board network.

More farmers and farm businesses now have computers. In fact, notes Waldie, farm computer use has doubled in the last two to three years.

Most people start with basic programs. Financial record keeping is common to all farms, and where most people start when they add a computer to their farm business. "I've observed it takes three to five years of computer use in order to build up people's confidence and their own data stream. Then, they move beyond simple record keeping," says Waldie.

Since 1990 the relative percentage of agriculture financial record keeping packages has decreased, while physical record keeping packages have increased. Physical software packages are enterprise specific. For example, the directory lists field records, greenhouses, and livestock health and production management in the physical record keeping category.

"I believe this trend will continue in the next two to four years," he says, "as more and more people use their computers for management information. For the same reason, the amount of analysis and planning software will also increase significantly."

The 1994 *Agriculture Software Directory* is available as a hard copy booklet and as a database on the FBMInet. The booklet form is available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices, or by writing Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. The electronic version is updated regularly. FBMInet's numbers in Alberta are (403)556-4104 in Olds and (403)438-2209 in Edmonton.

Contact: Bruce Waldie (403)556-4243

Report card on rural development activities released

The Report Card on the Rural Development Initiative shows the provincial government's response to rural community needs is taking shape.

The report card explains the provincial government's progress in helping rural Albertans revitalize their communities and improve their quality of life.

"I want to share the progress that my colleagues and I have achieved since Premier Klein appointed me minister responsible for rural development," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister. "And as an Albertan from a rural community, I am pleased with the progress of the initiative so far."

One report card highlight is the Services and Programs Electronic Retrieval System for Government (SPERG) program. It was designed to ease problems rural communities face getting information about government programs and services because not all government departments are represented in all communities. So, people must travel considerable distances to obtain basic information on government services. However with SPERG, the Alberta government is implementing electronic technology to make program and service information on all programs available in each government office.

Paszkowski recently released the report card and stressed the value of Alberta's rural communities to the economic well-being of the entire province. He also stressed the Government of Alberta's commitment to ensuring that these communities have the tools to thrive.

"One of the things that makes our rural communities vibrant is a strong agriculture economy," he says. "But rural development depends on more than just agriculture. The future must include other rural industries if jobs and populations are to be maintained. Agriculture alone cannot ensure vibrant rural communities, and a prosperous agriculture industry alone will not reverse the trend of depopulation in rural areas. That's why all of my colleagues in cabinet have joined together to make sure the Rural Development Initiative is a success. Rural development depends on all sectors of the economy working together."

As part of the Rural Development Initiative, the Alberta government has increased emphasis on entrepreneurial training, apprenticeship training and tourism development. Several government departments are working to help small communities and rural people acquire the skills to develop and implement community plans and provide internal leadership.

One example is the Alberta Local Opportunity Bond program. This program provides a tool for capital investment in local business and tourism development initiatives such as Heritage Rivers. As well, there are on-the-job training programs including the Alberta Community Employment Program, Northern Alberta Job Corps and the Registered Apprenticeship Program.

The Rural Development Initiative is an interdepartmental effort co-ordinated by the Rural Development Action Team. A number of departments have made changes over the past year. The changes, outlined in the report card, respond to recommendations made by rural Albertans during province-wide consultations hosted by the Minister's Council on Local Development. The consultations asked rural Albertans how the provincial government could help rural communities revitalize themselves. Rural community needs were identified by the local development council and reported in *Partners in Stewardship*.

Copies of the Rural Development Initiative report card are available at most provincial government offices, or by calling Alberta Agriculture's communications division at 427-2127.

Contact: Keith Price
(403)427-5341

Agri-News briefs

Key 4-H leaders meet for first time October 28

Key leaders in Alberta's 4-H program will meet for the first time later this week. Over 45 key leaders will take part in a three day workshop October 28 through 30 at Battle Lake provincial 4-H centre. Key leaders are volunteers who have served the 4-H program in various capacities. They were chosen by their district 4-H council as a district contact for clubs and councils. At the workshop they'll be updated on 4-H administration and learn how to access all resources available to 4-H members and leaders. "In most cases these people are already well known in the their community and are called upon to give guidance to new leaders," says Penny Wilkes, 4-H home economic and leadership development specialist. The Key Leader Program formalizes this relationship and ensures key leaders receive adequate training. Key leaders will meet again in January for further training. "These key leaders will work closely with regional 4-H specialists to form a stronger 4-H team. "This is truly a positive step for 4-H in Alberta," says Wilkes. For more information, contact Wilkes in Edmonton at (403)427-2541.

Turning the Corner at 1994 ag finance conference

Turning the corner on opportunities and risks in agricultural finance is the theme for the Canadian Bankers Association 1994 agricultural finance conference. The conference is November 23 through 25 in Regina. Opening keynote speaker is Larry Martin, director of economic research at the University of Guelph's George Martin Centre. The agenda divides presentations into pork, grain and oilseeds, supply management and beef sectors. Among the specific focuses are free trade, transportation, government safety nets, environmental issues and emerging technologies. For more information, contact Jennie Piekos in Toronto at (613)362-6092 or Jacques Hébert in Montreal at (514)840-8724.

Successful client consulting seminar

A seminar for farm management advisors, bankers and extension professionals will be offered in Edmonton and Calgary in early November. The seminar focuses on developing consultation skills by looking at job definitions, communication, follow-up and case studies. The seminar also includes a workbook for self-study. The Edmonton seminar is November 3 and 4, and will be held in Calgary November 9 and 10. The seminar is funded in part by the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative (FBMI). For more information, call Toma and Bouman at (403)433-5666 or fax (403)433-5946 in Edmonton.

Ten years of progress theme of national dehy association conference

The Canadian Dehydrators Association will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year at its annual conference and trade show. The event is November 15 through 17 in Saskatoon. The conference's first day includes business meetings and a separate pre-conference one-day technical conference on recent advances in alfalfa harvesting, processing and handling. The registration fee for the technical session is \$60. The main conference starts on November 16. The first day is an update of the Canadian alfalfa processing industry. Day two shifts to global markets and marketing. The trade show runs all three days. There is a registration fee discount before November 1. For registration information, contact the University of Saskatchewan extension division at (306)966-5539. For more information about the association, contact Karen Lutz at (403)450-0169.

Zone 2 pulse growers meeting November 17

Zone 2 of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission will hold its annual meeting in Vegreville on November 17 starting at 9:30 a.m. The program includes the annual zone meeting, growing and marketing information and preliminary results from 1994 pulse plots. The \$10 registration fee is payable at the door. To register, call the Alberta Agriculture district office in Vegreville at (403)632-5400. For more information, contact Gordon Tuck, zone two president, at (403)658-2403 or Neil Miller, crop specialist in Lacombe, at (403)782-3301.

Producer input important to engineering research priorities

As the Alberta Agriculture Engineering Advisory Committee (AAEAC) continually establishes its research priorities, input from producers and producer groups is important. "As farm practices become more complex it is increasingly important that contact with other commodity or industry based groups be established," says AAEAC Chairman Russ Nelson. Nelson says one of the AAEAC's main priorities is working with the industry to address its concerns and establish closer ties between industry and the various agencies. "This way view points can be exchanged and a better awareness of the problems can be developed," he explains. "The potential for joint projects to solve complex problems is also increased." AAEAC reviews various agricultural engineering areas such as structures and environment, soil and water engineering, power and machinery, and electrical systems and processing. For more information on AAEAC, contact Nelson in Olds at (403)556-8296 or AAEAC Secretary Darcy Fitzgerald in Edmonton at (403)427-2181.

Canola commission regional meetings through November

Regional meetings of the Alberta Canola Commission will run in 12 locations during the month of November. Meetings give growers an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns, learn about commission activities and participate in information sessions about canola production and market outlooks. The first meeting is region two's at the Beaverlodge research station on November 7. The region three meeting is in Donnelly on November 8. High Level is the site of the region one meeting on November 9. November 10 is the date for the region six meeting in Leduc. The region 11 meeting is November 14 in Provost. There are two regional meetings on November 15, region nine in Lethbridge and region seven in Spruce View (west of Innisfail). Vegreville is the place for the region 4 meeting on November 16. Again, on November 18 there are two meetings. Region five is in Neerlandia and region 10 in Vermilion. Region eight's meeting is in Three Hills on November 29. For more information, contact the provincial commission office in Edmonton at (403)452-6487.

Lakeland College offers new forages course

Lakeland College is offering a new course on forage identification, production and management starting on November 1. The course is one night a week for eight weeks. It's geared for forage producers and others in the seed industry and designed to provide the latest information about the forage industry. Major grasses and legumes, production and management, and feed quality will be discussed. Practical labs will be supplemented with theory. To register or for more information, call Lakeland College in Vermilion at (403)853-8444 or 1-800-661-6490.

Pacific NW canola conference Nov.9-11

The fourth annual Pacific Northwest Canola Conference will be in Spokane, Washington November 9 through 11. Formerly known as the Western Canola Development meetings, the conference is the single largest canola meeting in the U.S. The conference features North America's leaders in canola research, production and marketing. Gene Moose, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) international affairs and commodity program undersecretary, is the featured speaker for the November 10 luncheon. For more information, contact Cynthia Boynton at the US Canola Association (USCA) at (202)331-7036.

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October 31, 1994

Celebrate 4-H during national week Nov. 7-13

National 4-H Week, November 7 through 13 in 1994, is a time for celebration says Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister.

"The 4-H movement has played a significant role in Alberta for over 75 years," notes Walter Paszkowski. "Particularly in rural Alberta, we know the benefits of the 'learn to do by doing' formula that has shaped the lives and experiences of club members, their families and the many volunteers and friends of 4-H.

"As it's often described, 4-H is Canada's premier rural youth organization," adds Paszkowski. "4-H promotes and encourages our greatest resource, our youth, by helping young people develop life and leadership skills, learn about a host of new things through their projects and meet new friends."

More than 10,700 Albertans were officially involved in 4-H last year. This include 8,150 members and 2,500 leaders in 457 clubs. That number doesn't include the many volunteers on district, regional and provincial councils and boards, or the many friends of 4-H who support the movement in a variety of ways from buying 4-H steers to contributing to the provincial 4-H centre.

Alberta 4-Hers were involved in over 30 different projects ranging from livestock and homemaking, to mechanics and computers. Many were also involved in district, regional, provincial and international competitions and events.

The national awareness week was designed to give 4-H members and leaders a chance to profile 4-H in their communities, and give those communities the opportunity to show their support for 4-H.

Some Alberta 4-Hers will be go to Toronto for two national conferences held each year during National 4-H week. Both members and leaders will join their counterparts from across Canada, and also from the U.S., to learn new skills, meet new friends and have fun. [See separate story this issue.]

In 1993 there were more than 44,500 4-H members across Canada, 12,000 leaders and 3,700 clubs. National 4-H programs and services are supported and developed by the federal and provincial governments, 38 associations and 38 corporations, as well as individuals.

Contact: Dwight Dibben Arron Madson
(403)427-2137 (403)427-2541

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Eleven Alberta 4-Hers off to national conferences

Eleven Albertans will celebrate National 4-H Week by attending national conferences in Toronto November 10 through 14.

"These conferences are central to the national awareness week. Delegates will learn new skills, meet new people and have fun. Those are basic activities to 4-H, but the national conferences are a very special opportunity," says Marguerite Stark, provincial 4-H programs specialist. National 4-H Week is November 7 through 13.

Six senior Alberta 4-H members will attend the 63rd annual *National 4-H Conference*. They are: Karla Adam of Trochu, Kim Denis of Lacombe, Julie Hadwin of Consort, Dennis Kotowich of St. Paul, Perry Rasmuson of Gwynne and Liz Smith of Lethbridge. Each province sends six delegates.

Each province also sends five people to the *National Volunteer Leaders Conference*. Representing Alberta at the 15th annual conference are Iris Davies of Dewberry, Tracy Hall of Bassano, Gail Companion of High River, Karen Pederson of Barrhead and Lorraine Neal of Lacombe.

"The members' conference focuses on issue group work and is a terrific learning opportunity," notes Stark. The 1994 conference theme is *The future is ours for the making*. Delegates will discuss: environmental issues in land use, food safety, enhanced competitiveness of Canada's agri-food industry, rural communities, animal rights and animal welfare, and unemployment.

"The leaders' conference was developed from a belief that a strong 4-H program depends on informed, up-to-date, enthusiastic leaders," says Stark. "This conference is designed to strengthen leadership skills and provide opportunities to exchange ideas. The 1994 theme, helping you to help others, says that."

Leaders and members will join for a sharing fair. Provincial displays will be a starting point. "From there, people can ask questions about the displays and programs," she says.

Both the national volunteer leaders' and members' conferences are international. Canadian delegates are joined by six club member and five leader delegates from the U.S. As well, the conferences are at the same time as the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair allowing delegates time to take in one of Canada's foremost agricultural fairs. Conference delegates also get a mini-tour of Toronto sights including the CN Tower and Skydome.

Contact: Marguerite Stark
(403)948-8510

4-H "echoing" on FBMinet

A new 4-H echo has been launched coast-to-coast across Canada, and it's not a traditional sort of echo.

"The Canadian 4-H Council is pleased to announce the electronic arrival of 4-H on the *Farm Business Management Information Network* (FBMinet)," says executive director Mike Nowosad.

"There's now a national 4-H echo system on FBMinet," he adds.

In high tech terms, an echo is a shared public message area on an electronic bulletin board. The echo is for all 4-H members, leaders, staff and anyone else with an interest in and about 4-H.

"Primarily it's to exchange information," says Arron Madson, of Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch. "It's just another way to link and share information in the 4-H movement."

For example, the first item on the echo was a question from B.C. related to animal rights. One answer came from Alberta.

Bruce Waldie and David Thacker, FBMinet's founders, set up the national 4-H echo. Waldie is the Alberta systems operator and a management technology specialist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds. Thacker is FBMinet's national co-ordinator. Dale Poole, a friend of 4-H and Prince Edward Island's systems operator, will monitor the 4-H echo.

"We've been very fortunate with the help, support and knowledge of Bruce, David and Dale in setting up our national echo," says Nowosad. "As a national organization, we'd also like to thank Alberta 4-H for its key role in getting this system up and running."

To access a computer bulletin board requires a computer, modem and communications software. FBMinet's numbers in Alberta are (403)556-4104 in Olds and (403)438-2209 in Edmonton. FBMinet has several echos including coast-to-coast chat, farm finance, and crop and livestock production.

Contact: Mike Nowosad Arron Madson Bruce Waldie
(613)723-4444 (403)427-2541 (403)556-4243

Fall nitrogen application can limit pea field selection

While fall application of nitrogen fertilizer does have advantages, it can also limit choices next spring when it's time to seed field pea crops says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"High nitrogen rates can be detrimental to pea crops," explains Mark Olson, a crop specialist in Olds.

Peas are a legume. Legumes fix nitrogen themselves, so applying nitrogen doesn't take advantage of this "natural nitrogen factory". As well, high nitrogen nutrient levels increase the green growth and can delay maturity.

Weeds also benefit from higher nitrogen soil levels. "Peas are weak competitors and should be seeded on your most weed-free fields," notes Olson.

Weeds, soil type and crop rotation are all factors to consider when growing peas he notes. "A minor weed problem in cereals can be a troublesome one in peas. One reason is because there are a limited number of herbicides on the market for weed control in peas."

"Cold, wet soils, such as heavy clay, aren't my first choice for growing peas," he adds. "You should consider lighter soils such as loam."

Peas and canola shouldn't follow each other in a crop rotation. Sclerotinia stem rot, a serious yield-reducing canola disease, also affects peas.

Also for reasons of disease, in particular ascochyta, peas shouldn't be planted on peas. Ascochyta is a devastating fungus. "Plant pathologists suggest peas be grown no more than once in five years on a field," says Olson.

For more information about growing peas and other pulse crops, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture pulse crop specialist.

Contact: Mark Olson
(403)556-4220

Field processing corn opens many doors

A harvester that is also a mobile processor could be the doorway to giving Alberta growers and processors more corn production and processing options.

During this year's corn harvest, a Taber company began testing a new corn harvester/processor. "The project is to determine if this type of equipment is viable and beneficial," says Dave Ritchie, a development officer with the Canada/Alberta Environmental Sustainability Agreement (CAESA).

CAESA's processing-based program is helping fund the Diamond "S" Produce project. "One element of CAESA is a program designed to help agrifood processors develop and adopt more environmentally friendly processing methods," he says.

"This particular project is related to a new technology with advantages that include reducing waste material handling and disposal at a processing plant," he adds.

A traditional corn harvester removes the corn cob from its stock. Husking the cob, orienting the cob and cutting corn from the cob are done at a processing plant. Solid waste materials are hauled to a landfill and effluent put into the municipal water treatment system.

On the other hand, the new field cutter does the four processing functions right in the field — it harvests, husks, orients the cob and cuts off the kernels. All waste material is left in the field as crop residue.

"Handling waste is a major cost for processing companies. This new, environmentally friendly process takes a load off internal and municipal water treatment dealing with the effluent, plus reduces materials destined for a landfill.

"A viable new technology — and, from the first field test it seems to be accomplishing what was thought it could — has many potential advantages. They can be summed up as enhancing our province's vegetable processing industry, and could make Alberta's corn sector a bigger player in domestic and world markets," says Ritchie.

Processors could reduce their transportation and handling costs, and perhaps some capital costs with the field cutter. "While a field cutter decreases the capital costs in building new processing facilities because much of the work is done in the field, this is offset by the cost of a field cutter. Estimates are the equipment would run to over \$500,000 (U.S.)," he says.

There are also potential advantages on the production side. One obvious benefit is returning the fibre and nutrients in the crop residue back to the soil. In addition, corn growers could increase how much corn they plant.

The harvester/processor project assessment will be completed this fall. For more information about this project or the CAESA processing-based program, contact Ritchie in Edmonton at (403)427-7325.

Contact: Dave Ritchie
(403)427-7325

Community shared agriculture explained at workshops

The concept of community shared agriculture is relatively new in North America, but it could become a whole new way of having fresh vegetables if you live in a city.

Two workshops that describe the concept of community shared agriculture and how it works will be held at the Namao Community Hall on November 14 and the Barrhead Provincial Building on November 15.

Workshops are geared to producers looking for an alternative way to market their farm produce. Topics to be covered include what community shared agriculture is, why get involved, its mechanics and organization, and producer experiences.

"Basically, community shared agriculture is an agreement between a producer and a consumer, or consumers, to share responsibility for the food system," says Janice McGregor, Alberta Agriculture rural development specialist in Morinville.

Relatively new in Canada, the concept has been adapted from Europe. It can apply to meat, milk and eggs, but the Alberta experience has been with fresh vegetables.

"The arrangement is both social and economic. It bridges the gap between what has become a distant relationship between producers and consumers," she adds. "The economics are the sharing of risk."

The community shared agriculture model starts with a group, a farmer and consumers, calculating the needs of its members and

then growing enough to serve that need. In the agreement, the consumers purchase a share in a producer's crop — such as vegetables — before the crop is planted, then receive fresh product throughout the growing season for their investment. Members establish the guidelines such as costs, crops and a delivery schedule. Shareholders share all the risks — such as weather and pest problems — as well as the benefits, the fresh vegetables.

"For the farmer, it solves a couple of problems — scraping up capital and searching for markets," says McGregor. The farmer gets money up front, has an assured market and gets a fair price.

"Freshness, freshness and freshness are advantages for the consumer," she adds. "The food is locally grown and produce is direct from the garden. As well, the price is affordable, the consumer sees who grows and how their food is grown, and they may also get in more trips to the country."

Workshop registration is required by November 10. For more information, contact McGregor in Morinville at (403)939-4351, Gail Lemke in Stony Plain at (403)963-6101, Kris Bozic or Jim Craig in Westlock at (403)349-3963, or Cheryl Leach in Barrhead [Barrhead workshop only] at (403)674-2338.

The workshops are jointly sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA).

Contact: Janice McGregor Gail Lemke
(403)939-4351 (403)963-6101
Kris Bozic/Jim Craig
(403)349-3963

Serious commitment, neat experience in CSA

For 11 weeks during the growing season, the Stark family of St. Albert spent Thursday morning harvesting vegetables they delivered later that day to the 18 shareholders in their community shared agriculture (CSA) project.

Ron and Yolande Stark, who have a u-pick strawberry operation on their Tipi Creek Farm northwest of St. Albert, were approached in March 1994 to consider being the production side of a CSA group. The Starks had some vegetable growing experience and sold them along with their berries. They decided to join the project, says Yolande, "Because we knew for sure someone would want the vegetables."

They also decided to start small, and that's advice Stark passes on to farmers considering a CSA project. "It's a nice way of bringing in cash in the spring, and it's easy to sign on too many people when they're waving chequebooks in your face. But, don't go big right away. Expand slowly."

For their first season, the Starks planted less than an acre of vegetables. Lots of moisture contributed to a good growing season. By the 11th week each shareholder had received over 280 pounds of

vegetables. This included early crops such as radishes and four kinds of lettuce, to later crops such as carrots, potatoes and squash. Instead of a final delivery on the 12th week, the Starks held a field day and barbecue. Some shareholders dug potatoes and carrots, taking home as much as a 100 or more pounds of vegetables.

"We reached the goal, of 250 pounds, set in the beginning," Stark notes. While shareholders received much more than that, some crops weren't as bountiful as others. For example, high moisture levels brought out more bugs and limited the cauliflower crop to only two weeks, while over five pounds of cucumbers were available for weeks in a row. Stark describes this as one of the risks that balances out from crop-to-crop within a season and potentially between seasons.

With a relatively late start, the 1994 season didn't include broccoli or tomatoes, however the Starks did grow radishes, lettuce, onions, spinach, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, beans, cucumbers, potatoes, pumpkins and squash.

Stark says they'd repeat their experience in community shared agriculture because of their connection to the consumer. They like the personal touch in growing food, she says, especially in knowing who they're growing it for.

Green cow and greenbacks at international beef symposium

Green cows and greenbacks are the twin themes running through an international beef symposium in Montana January 18 through 20.

"A sustainable and profitable beef industry for the next century is what the symposium is all about," says Ross Gould, leader of Alberta Agriculture's beef and dairy group, and one of the conference committee members.

Three plenary sessions begin the symposium. Speakers will examine the line between profitable cattle and their environmental benefit, biotechnology, and trade issues between Canada and the United States.

Concurrent sessions cover a wide variety of topics within those three boundaries. Session titles include: cost-effective cattle nutrition; wholesome product — cow/calf to consumer; aftermath grazing; effective use of gene markers; do your own environmental audit; and, non-traditional grazing.

"Speakers include leading researchers, beef extension specialists and producers from both sides of the border," notes Gould.

"These symposia have provided a remarkable opportunity to bring the beef cattle industry together for personal contact between researchers, extension personnel and producers — to exchange information, look at research and discuss developmental needs," he adds.

This is the third symposium in a series that began four years ago in Great Falls, also the 1995 host. It's sponsored by Montana State University and Agriculture Canada's research branch with support from Alberta and Montana agencies as well as beef related organizations. As well, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Idaho and North Dakota co-operate in providing the program and are represented at the symposium.

A registration discount is available before December 21. Earlybird registration is \$85 (U.S.). Conference brochures are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. For more information contact a district beef specialist, or Gould in Edmonton at (403)427-5083.

*Contact: Ross Gould
(403)427-5083*

Agri-News briefs

Ultrasonic device for mouse control

Ultrasonic mouse repellents can be effective, but there are limits says an Alberta Agriculture problem wildlife specialist. "This isn't a panacea," cautions Mike Dorrance. "Effectiveness is limited by where you put the device." One of the limiting factors is that effectiveness depends on line-of-sight. If something is between of the ultrasonic wave and the mouse, it doesn't work. "For example, a crowded garage with boxes on the floor would interfere with the waves reaching a mouse behind them," he notes. "They are probably not effective in a building with boxes, sacks and other materials on the floor," he adds. The repellent device would more likely be effective in an empty crawlspace or a room with nothing on the floor, but on shelves or hanging up. "In those situations there's nothing to deflect the waves or act as a barrier," he explains. Dorrance suggest people consider where they'd use such as device before buying one. "Especially since these devices can cost as much as \$150 dollars, you need to decide if that's the best way to control a problem with mice," he says. For more information, contact Dorrance in Edmonton at (403)422-4844.

Calf to cooler beef industry outlooks Nov. 23 & 24

A beef industry outlook seminar will be held in two northwest Alberta communities on successive days, November 23 and 24. With a focus on ensuring profit through the 1990s, seminar speakers will look at different aspects of the business from the calf to the meat cooler. The seminar is at the Westlock Community Hall on November 23 and at the Lakedell Hall (Westerose) on November 24. Speakers are: Ron Noble, a cow-calf producer from Lloydminster, and Peter Wombeck of Western Feedlots about issues, concerns and goals in their sectors; Brian Nilsson, of Nilsson Brothers, with a look at marketing trends; Don Pardi of Cargill Foods on challenges in the packing industry; Anne Dunford of Canfax with a market

outlook; and, Kathy Keeler of the Beef Information Centre on Calf to cooler beef industry outlooks Nov. 23 & 24 consumer concerns. Pre-registration is required before November 18. The \$20 fee includes lunch. Seminars run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information or to register, call the Alberta Agriculture district office in Westlock at (403)349-4465 or Drayton Valley at (403)542-5368.

Fall swine seminars Nov.28 & 29

Pork production for the 21st century and producer networks and partnerships are themes in two fall swine seminars. The first is in Morinville on November 28 and the second in Red Deer on November 29. The one-day seminars start at 10 a.m. and run through 4 p.m. Featured speakers are John Lawrence of Iowa State University and Alberta Agriculture specialists. Registration is \$25 per person before November 23, and \$30 at the door. For more information, contact your regional pork specialist or Art Lange in Edmonton at (403)427-5319 or fax (403)427-1057.

Marketing courses starting soon

Cattle and grain marketing workshops will be offered throughout the late fall and into early spring by KenAgra Management Services. Courses are funded in part by the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative (FBMI). Level one strategic cattle marketing is planned for several locations, starting November 15 in Camrose. Other tentative locations are Rimbey, Marwayne/Elk Point and Lamont. Both level one and level two strategic grain marketing will also start in November. Level one includes four skill development sessions, two outlook sessions, a weekly newsletter on current grain markets and a personal consultation. One or two one-day classes per month run between November 30, 1994 and March 1995. Level two is designed for people with a futures account or who want to open an account. The course includes four group sessions plus three hours of personal consultation. These seminars

will also run between November 1994 and March 1995, starting in Red Deer on November 17, Grande Prairie on November 23 and Edmonton on November 30. The level two course pre-requisite is level one or Futuresim. For more information, call KenAgra at (403)468-4442 or fax (403)465-3207.

Forage research and AFC general meeting Nov.6-8

Forage researchers, provincial forage and range management specialists, and producer groups will meet November 6 through 8 in Calgary for a forage research co-ordination meeting. They'll review current forage research, co-ordinate and pool research efforts, and establish formal links between researchers and extension workers. This first annual meeting is a co-operative effort of the Alberta Forage Council and Agriculture and AgriFood Canada. Each year, one or two prominent forage researchers from outside Alberta will be invited. In 1994 those invitees are Paul McCaughey, from the Agriculture Canada Brandon research station, and Dennis Cash, of Montana State University. McCaughey will discuss cattle production in alfalfa pastures and Cash, current forage research in Montana. The Alberta Forage Council general meeting, on the afternoon of November 8, follows the research co-ordination meeting. To register for the research co-ordination meeting, contact Ken Richards at (403)327-4561 at the Agriculture Canada research station in Lethbridge. For more information on the Alberta Forage Council general meeting, contact Laurel Aitken at (403)929-2019.

Increased beef entries at Farmfair

The second-largest number ever of beef cattle entries is expected at the 1994 Northlands *Farmfair*. Cattle entries increased by 18.5 per cent over 1993. The dramatic increase is most evident in breed associations that recently revamped their marketing programs with more exhibitor incentives. For example, 97 more Black Angus head were entered. The 1994 Angus Winter Classic Sweepstakes boasts \$75,000 in cash and prizes, including \$25,000 to the overall winner. Other breed marketing programs include Limousin Bonanza Gold, Charolais Splash for Cash, Shorthorn Pot of Gold and Prime Piedmontese Purse. New for Farmfair'94 are a two-day cattle penning competition, an international marketing seminar, a horse training clinic by Ray Hunt and the first ever Farmfair raffle. For more information, contact Kenn Bur in Edmonton at (403)471-7210.

Livestock agricultural short courses at Lakeland College

A variety of livestock short courses will be offered by Lakeland College this fall and winter. Bud Williams' stockmanship school runs all day on November 19. Beef and dairy cattle artificial insemination goes November 21 through 25. Winter courses will include cattle hoof trimming, calf delivery management and stockman's practices. A range of equine courses will also be offered. This includes basic horse health care on November 5, basic hoof care November 4 through 6, a cutting clinic November 11 through 13 and CEF western riding levels one and two November 5 and 6, and levels three and four November 26 and 27. For more information on livestock courses, contact Melanie Hammond in Vermilion at (403)853-8623. For more information on equine courses, contact Kristy Foote at (403)853-8644. Lakeland College can also be reached toll-free at 1-800-661-6490.

Titles galore at Multi-Media Library

Alberta Agriculture's Multi-Media Library continually adds new titles, especially videos, to its shelves. Among the most recent additions are videos about farm safety, environmental toxicology, family farm transfer, leadership and putting ideas into action. *Safety Net* (335 VT) is a fast-paced entertaining look at farm dangers. The 15-minute video was produced by Farm Safety 4 Just Kids. The Canadian Network of Toxicology Centres produced the 15-minute *Environmental Toxicology — A Question of Balance* (304-9 VT). The video discusses the right balance between chemical use and your own health by becoming informed. Basic principles of toxicology are covered. The Royal Bank has put together a 25-minute look at farm transfer. *Strategies for your Family Farm Transfer* (819-8 VT) follows a family through their farm transfer process. *Leadership and the New Science* (391-31 VT), based on the book of the same name, takes leadership to the cutting edge by providing a new set of lenses to look through at organizations. *Ideas into Action* (391-30 VT) discusses both barriers to creative thinking and how to come up with viable ideas for products, services, processes and procedures. All the videos are available for loan by writing Multi-Media Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. A complete library catalogue is also available.

Coming agricultural events notice

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **December 1994** or in **1995**?

1. Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization). **Please include your telephone number:**

Please return this form by November 24, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Communications Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
FAX (403)427-2861

("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in **Agri-News**.
The next list will be **December 5, 1994**)

November 7, 1994

4-H scholarships awarded to 86 students

Eighty-six past and present 4-H members have been awarded post-secondary scholarships for the 1994-95 academic year.

"Post-secondary students from throughout the province benefitted from over \$51,000 offered in scholarship monies this year," says Elaine Ash, scholarship co-ordinator.

Over 300 applications were received for the nearly 50 scholarships. Applications were considered on the basis of 4-H and community involvement, leadership skills, school activities, academic standing and other criteria set by scholarship donors.

"Two new scholarship categories were added to the provincial program for the 1994-95 academic year. With these additional scholarships, the total number available stands at 47," notes Ash.

This year the Farm Credit Corporation (FCC) added a second 4-H scholarship program. FCC had already provides \$300 regional scholarships. FCC's newest national scholarship program includes two \$1,000 scholarships for Alberta 4-Hers.

The Robert Sherwood Memorial Scholarship of \$475 was also added to the Alberta 4-H scholarship roster in 1994.

An existing scholarship sponsored by the Westaskiwin District 4-H Council was renamed as a memorial scholarship. The Wetaskiwin District Heather Rasmuson Memorial Scholarship is \$700.

Alberta's 4-H scholarships are funded by individuals, corporations, associations, the Alberta government and memorial funds. A wide range of scholarships are available to both former and current Alberta 4-H members.

For more information about the Alberta 4-H scholarship program or starting a 4-H scholarship, contact Alberta Agriculture home economics and 4-H branch at Room 200, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or call (403)422-4444.

Contact: Elaine Ash Arron Madson
(403)422-4444 (403)422-4444

Editor's note: A list of scholarship winners starts on page 6.

Gadsby family first to buy lifetime brand

S J quarter circle on the right hip isn't the oldest brand in Alberta, but it now has the distinction of being the first lifetime brand purchased in a new program.

In July, Alberta Agriculture announced a lifetime brand program. Instead of renewals every four years, cattle and horse brand owners now purchase their brand for life. These lifetime brands cost \$220.

Stan Jackson, a Gadsby area rancher, first registered his brand on December 17, 1946. Some 44 years later, the brand was transferred to S J Hereford Ranch owned by Jackson and his son Gordon. On October 14, 1994 the brand became theirs for life.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

"This new program saves a lot of paper work, both for brand owners and the provincial brand office," says Cliff Munroe, head of livestock marketing services.

"Our brand office handled 55,000 brand renewals every four years, so not only does the lifetime brand program save administrative time, it also cuts costs," he adds.

The change also benefits the owners of arbitrary brands. Arbitrary brand owners couldn't renew their brand if it lapsed. "Lifetime brands make it easier to pass brand ownership to other family members," notes Munroe.

Another amendment to brand regulations allows single character with symbol brands to be registered starting January 1, 1995.

The move to a lifetime brand program was based on a government-industry sponsored review of Alberta's brand registration policy. Brand market values in North America and how much Alberta brand holders were willing to pay for a one-time, lifetime brand were studied. The study was reviewed by an industry advisory committee with representatives from major cattle organizations.

By mid-October some 650 lifetime brands were registered. Current brand owners must purchase a lifetime brand when their brand comes up for renewal between now and 1998.

Contact: *Cliff Munroe*
(403)427-4241

Partnerships for profit pork seminar theme

Partners and networking are the main themes at two pork seminars later this month.

The seminars, a partnership project of Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation (APPDC) and the Pig Industry Discussion Group, will be in Morinville on November 28 and Red Deer on November 29. Seminars start at 9:30 a.m. and run to 4 p.m.

"The program is the same at both locations," says Art Lange, supervisor of Alberta Agriculture's Swine Improvement Program. St. Jean Baptiste Parish Hall (10010-101 Ave.) is the Morinville location. The other seminar is at the Black Knight Inn in Red Deer.

Featured speaker is John Lawrence, a livestock extension economist and assistant professor at Iowa State University. "We're extremely pleased to have Dr. Lawrence, a leading authority in partnerships and networking, at our seminars," notes Lange. "We would have liked to have more than two seminars, but Dr. Lawrence was only available for these two days."

Lawrence will speak twice at the day long seminars. In a morning presentation, he'll describe producer networking and help producers answer the question if networking is for them. In a seminar wrap-session, Lawrence will discuss the general principles

of setting up producer-to-producer contracts, plus the trends and myths in the U.S. pork industry.

"Partnerships and networking are a growing trend in North America," says Lange. "In the afternoon, other presentations will deal with those trends." Bert Denning, Alberta Agriculture regional pork specialist in Barrhead, will discuss "networking with neighbors". Irene Wenger, Vermilion-based regional specialist, will talk about farrowing co-operatives. Lange will describe grain grower co-operatives. Opportunities with segregated early weaning technology is Marvin Salomons' topic. Salomons is the Red Deer-based pork specialist.

Also on the seminar agenda is Jurgen Preugschas, APPDC chair. He'll discuss the opportunities and challenges for Alberta's pork producers. Looking at the changing pork industry is Ab Barrie, an Alberta Agriculture trade director. His topic is global pork production trends.

Registration fees are due by November 23. The pre-registration fee is \$25, or pay \$30 at the door. This fee includes lunch. Cheques can be made payable to the Pig Industry Discussion Group and mailed to Pork Section, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, 204, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

"Because we're limited to just the two seminars, regional pork specialists and myself will arrange group transportation," says Lange. "Producers who live some distance away, should contact one of the regional specialists or me in Edmonton," he adds.

Regional pork specialist can be reached at (403)674-8247 in Barrhead, (403)853-8128 in Vermilion and (403)340-5336 in Red Deer. Lange's number in Edmonton is (403)427-5319 or fax (403)427-1057. All numbers are toll-free on the RITE system, call 310-000 to connect with your nearest RITE operator.

Seminar brochures were mailed to pork producers by the APPDC. Brochures are also available from the regional pork specialists and from the pork section in Edmonton.

Contact: *Art Lange*
(403)427-5319

New time and place for provincial conservation workshop

If you've a permanent space on your January calendar for the Alberta's provincial conservation workshop and the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) annual meeting, take out an eraser to mark both a new time and location.

Over the last five years the workshop has been held in January in Edmonton. In 1995, the workshop moves to Red Deer February 23 through 25.

"Holding the workshop and annual meeting in conjunction with *Farm Progress Days* at the Westerner was one of the reasons for

the change," says Peter Gamache, workshop co-ordinator. The full registration package includes admission to the trade show. The trade show features the latest in direct seeding equipment in an 80,000 square foot indoor display space.

The three-day workshop includes sessions related to the 1995 theme of "opportunities and challenges in sustainable agriculture" on February 23 and 24. February 25 is direct seeding Saturday. A two-day water quality symposium, held in conjunction with the annual workshop, runs February 21 and 22. [See separate story this issue.]

Workshop keynote speaker is Dennis Avery, director of the Centre for Global Food Issues. Avery, recognized internationally for his knowledge of how the world can feed itself and protect the environment, will discuss high-yield agriculture, biotechnology and conservation farming systems.

"Mr. Avery believes we can meet growing world food demand and conserve soils and wildlife habitat," notes Gamache. "One of his claims is that high-yield agriculture is already saving 10 million square miles of wildlife habitat because it has tripled existing agriculture land's productivity."

Other featured speakers include Doug Penney of Alberta Agriculture on precision farming, Gary Stringam of the University of Alberta on the biotechnology revolution, Steve Coffey of North Carolina State University on watershed assessment and solutions to water quality problems, consultant Gaylen Armstrong on biodiversity on the farm, and John Doran of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) agricultural research service on building soil quality.

ACTS holds its 17th annual meeting on February 24. The Alberta Forage Council will also hold its annual meeting during the workshop on February 24.

Morning sessions are followed by a manufacturers' forum.

"A variety of registration packages are available," notes Gamache. "There are also early bird discounts before January 15."

Full registration is \$120 per person or \$160 per couple before January 15. After that date, it's \$150 per person and \$190 per couple. There are also two-day, single-day and student rates.

The provincial workshop is presented by ACTS and Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. For more information, contact Gamache in Edmonton at (403)422-4385, or ACTS executive manager Russ Evans at Box 1, Site 9, R.R. 5, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2G6 or (403)936-5306.

For more information on the water quality symposium, contact Brent Paterson at (403)381-5515.

Conference information is available from regional conservation co-ordinators, municipal agricultural fieldmen and all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: Peter Gamache
(403)422-4385

Russ Evans
(403)936-5306

Two-day agriculture water symposium in February

Agricultural water quality is in the spotlight at a two-day Western Canadian symposium February 21 and 22 in Red Deer.

The symposium, sponsored in part by the Canada/Alberta Environmental Sustainability Agreement (CAESA), precedes – and is held in conjunction with – the 1995 provincial conservation workshop and the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) 17th annual meeting February 23 through 25.

"The purpose of the symposium is to bring together people from across Western Canada to discuss and exchange information about water quality," says Brent Paterson, the symposium's chair. Paterson also heads Alberta Agriculture's land evaluation and reclamation branch.

Participants will learn about studies, research and activities in Western Canada. "We hope this symposium will live up to its theme of approaching water quality issues together. By sharing information, we can build co-operative agreements and eliminate some duplication of work," Paterson says.

So, the symposium agenda will emphasize water quality programs, in particular those coming out of provincial/federal Green Plan agreements. "One of the priority areas in CAESA is agriculture's impact on water quality, and that's also true in other western provinces," he notes.

"The symposium is open to anyone interested in agriculture's impact on water quality including producers, researchers, extension workers and others in the agriculture industry," he adds.

For more information on the symposium, contact Paterson in Lethbridge at (403)381-5515.

Contact: Brent Paterson
(403)381-5515

Nominations open for provincial conservation awards

If there's an outstanding farm conservation family or conservation organization in your community, organizers of a provincial conservation award program want to hear from you.

Nominations are open for the fifth annual *Soil Conservation Awards*. The awards are sponsored by the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) and the Western Producer.

"These awards have recognized outstanding commitment and achievement, the people and organizations leading conservation activities in Alberta, and both conservation pioneers and innovators," says John Hermans, head of Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. "I encourage anyone who knows a potential nominee to fill in a form and send it in."

The farm family award recognizes outstanding achievement and leadership in soil conservation by Alberta farm families. A farm family can be any combination of a family-owned farm including partnerships. Nomination deadline is November 30, 1994. A provincial winner will be selected from regional finalists.

The group award honors outstanding performance by an Alberta group in demonstrating its commitment to soil conservation. Provincial organizations aren't eligible. Groups can be nominated annually, but can't receive the award in successive years. December 31, 1994 is the nomination deadline.

Nominees and the nominator must sign the nomination form in both award categories.

Nomination forms are available from regional conservation co-ordinators, all Alberta Agriculture district offices and the ACTS office at Box 1, Site 9, R.R. 5, Calgary, T2P 2G6 or (403)936-5306.

The 1995 awards will be presented during the *1995 Conservation Workshop* and the 17th ACTS annual meeting February 23 through 25 in Red Deer. Provincial winners have their workshop registration and accommodation paid, and also make a short presentation at the workshop.

Contact: John Hermans
(403)422-4385

Russell Evans
(403)936-5306

Actions "Creating Tomorrow"

New and important actions have been taken in the agriculture and food industry in the wake of the *Creating Tomorrow* process reports the chair of the *Creating Tomorrow* progress task team.

This spring, the Agriculture and Food Council surveyed private sector people and companies involved in the 1992-93 *Creating Tomorrow* forums and final conference. They were asked to list any actions they'd taken relative to the *Creating Tomorrow*'s three basic goals. Those goals are improving the industry's competitiveness, sustaining the natural resource base and environment, and enhancing strengths of people, family and communities.

"Survey response provided us with a list of actions various industry sectors have tackled and tried since the January 1993 *Creating Tomorrow* conference," says Pat Durin, council member and chair of the *Creating Tomorrow* progress task team.

Examples cited in the increased competitiveness goal included lobbying the federal government to keep the small business tax credit, exploring value-added product opportunities in the U.S. and Europe, looking at new product lines from by-products and continuing support to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers.

"This was the area where the most action has been taken, at least from what the survey tells us," notes Durin. "One of the survey's purposes was to identify gaps in actions, and these results point to more work and action needed in environmental sustainability and rural development

"That's not to say there weren't actions taken in these two goal areas," he adds. "For example, organizations and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development have been involved in a number of environment related projects. A program to help processors find methods to reduce and manage waste water is one example."

Putting more emphasis on using local products was an action reported to enhance the strengths of the agri food industry's people, families and communities.

About 10 per cent of the individuals and companies responded to the survey. "While we're pleased with this mail-in response, we hope to do better in the future," says Durin.

The Agriculture and Food Council will study and discuss the survey results. "The information from these responses is significant, and will help the Council assess where there are gaps in actions," he adds.

Another survey is planned for January 1995. "We will continue to monitor progress toward *Creating Tomorrow*'s vision," says Durin.

For more information, on the Agriculture and Food Council and *Creating Tomorrow*, write the council at 3rd Floor, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or call (403)427-2417.

Contact: Pat Durin
(403)935-4411

Malcolm Barr
(403)672-8034 or
(403)428-1229

Agri-News briefs

Sheep task force looking for study volunteers

The Alberta Sheep Industry Task Force's production and economics committee is looking for sheep producer volunteers for a detailed economic study. This detailed study of management, investment, production practices, costs and returns will cover the 1994 production year. Study data will be used to establish sound production, management and financial benchmarks for the industry. Specific information about an individual operation will be kept confidential, but will be used to create general sheep production models. If you are interested in participating, contact Wray Whitmore in Edmonton at (403)427-5083 or Kim Stanford in Lethbridge at (403)381-5150.

WSGA 99th convention November 29 through December 1

The business of beef is the theme for the Western Stock Growers' Association's (WSGA) 99th convention. The convention, trade show and cowboy craft fair begins on November 29 and runs through December 1. The event will be held at the Medicine Hat Lodge. Three speakers are featured on November 30. Their topics are sizing your cows for the 21st century, is intensive grazing for you and the six Ms of management. A highlight of the three-day event is a centennial fund raising auction. The WSGA plans three key events to celebrate its centennial between July 1995 and July 1996. The auction will help fund these events, including a 60-mile centennial cattle drive in July 1996. For more information about the conference, contact the WSGA in Calgary at (403)250-9121. For more information about the centennial celebrations, contact centennial co-ordinator Rhonda Clark at the same number.

Sheep producers sponsor new scholarships

At least two scholarships are now available to members of sheep producers' families. The first, established by the North Central Sheep Breeders Association and Edmonton Northlands Farmfair, is \$200. The Northwest Sheep Producers Association followed by sponsoring another scholarship. "Other regional producer groups are also looking at scholarships open to students in their areas," says Doug Laurie of the northwest group. The first two scholarships are open to children and grandchildren of current sheep producers within their regional boundaries. While scholarships can be used for post-secondary education, special needs students at any grade

level can also apply for the scholarship and use it for equipment, services or programs. Application deadlines for both scholarships is December 31, 1994. Scholarship awards will be announced a month later. For more information, call Laurie in Stony Plain at (403)963-6711 or Leroy Emerson at Northlands at (403)471-7210.

Farm mechanics short courses at Lakeland College

Lakeland College in Vermilion is offering a variety of farm mechanics short courses this fall and winter. Farm small engine service and maintenance runs the evenings of December 1 and 6. Five different welding courses are also scheduled. They are: basic MIG welding, all-day November 14 through 18; gas welding 1 afternoons November 21 through December 16; basic farm welding, all-day November 21 through 25; advanced farm welding all-day November 28 through December 2; and, basic arc welding 1 afternoons January 2 through 27. For more information, contact Melanie Hammond at (403)853-8623 or 1-800-661-6490.

Urban families targeted for unique beef ACC promotion

Urban Albertans will be receiving a message from the province's cattle producers in the next few weeks. A postcard message highlighting the nutritional value and benefits of Alberta beef will be sent to 100,000 households. Approximately 25,000 beef producers will be sending the postcards. They can add personal messages to the card, and invite comments and questions from the urban recipients. The postcards feature two Alberta-grown athletes and the slogan *The boys come home to beef*. Those "boys" are triathlete Marc Becker and world water skiing champion Jaret Llewellyn. "We are doing this for two reasons," says Mabel Hamilton, a cattle producer and chair of the Alberta Cattle Commission promotion committee. "We want to support two world-class Alberta athletes and we want to promote our world-class product, Alberta beef, here at home." For more information, contact Hamilton in Innisfail at (403)224-2380, or Joanne Lemke at the Alberta Cattle Commission in Calgary at (403)275-4400.

New pre-employment swine training program set-up

Lakeland College and the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation have teamed up to offer a 16-week swine worker training program. The program was developed because of a shortage of skilled workers and the many employment opportunities in the swine industry. This program starts December 5 and includes eight weeks at the college's farrow-to-finish operation, followed by an eight week work placement on a hog farm. There are spaces for 30 students. The program is aimed at social allowance or unemployment insurance benefit recipients who want a change of direction and the chance for long-term employment. Anyone interested in the swine worker training program must apply through their local Canada Employment Centre. For more information, contact Ted Sutton, animal sciences instructor, at (403)853-8612; Melanie Hammond, agriculture extension, at (403)853-8623; or, Lakeland College communications office at (403)853-8528.

Last call for Alberta Farm Woman of the Year nominations

November 30 is the cut-off date for nominating farm women for the Alberta Farm Women's Network *Alberta Farm Woman of the Year* award. Judging criteria include community volunteer work, leadership, dedication to the farming community, and contributions and support of her family and farm. Nominees must be over 18 year old, live in Alberta and agree to accept the nomination. Nomination submissions must be typed. For more information, contact Faye Mayberry at (403)886-4129.

1994-95 4-H Scholarship Recipients

A & E Cappelle LN Herefords Scholarship	approx. \$150	Merry Turtiak	Evansburg
Agrifood International Cooperative Ltd. (Division of Dairyworld Foods)	\$500	Angela Johnson Roland Sawatzky Tim Armstrong	Didsbury Didsbury Dapp
Alberta Dairy Association and Alberta Agriculture-University Scholarships	\$1,000	Julianne Sage Gail Cunningham Lorena Reinhardt	Spruce Grove Kelsey Rockyford
Alberta Ford and Mercury Dealer Scholarship	\$1,000	James Hagel Wendy Gano Janis Isaman Shelanda Kujala Leslie Stelmach Tammy Armstrong Kimberly Pimm	Schuler Crossfield Consort Eckville Lamont Thorhild Grimshaw
Alberta Treasury Branches	\$1,000	Kirsty Kotke Laura Jeffery Lindsay Hewson Tammy Young Nathan Carter Shawna Willis Nyla Kristensen	Fort Macleod Olds Delia Camrose Innisfree Mayerthorpe Dixonville
Alberta Wheat Pool-1st Year	\$500	Jody Wacowich Maureen Mappin	Redwater Byemoor

Alberta Wheat Pool-2nd Year	\$500	Dana Bentley Curtis Borduzak	Progress, BC Vimy
Blue Klein Memorial Scholarship	\$250	Christopher Manyluk	Red Deer
Calgary 4-H Alumni Scholarship	\$300	Nancy Hixt	Beiseker
Ceres International Women's Fraternity	\$100	Jamie Belanger	Morinville
The Co-operators Scholarship	\$1,000	Andrea Wojcik	High River
Dana Misick Memorial Scholarship	\$500	Joanne Rekimowich	Lloydminster
Dixon Shield Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$325	Lori Andrews	Barrhead
Don Matthews Scholarship	\$200	Darren Hueppelsheuser	Blackfalds
Edith Taylor Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$225	Kenda Lubeck	Fairview
Farm Credit Corporation 4-H Scholarship Awards Program	\$1,000	Kimberley Denis Kari Harbin	Lacombe Rivercourse
Farm Credit Corporation Regional Scholarship	\$300	Elizabeth Gordon Regan Wojcik Marie Rawe Angela Golley Janice Feenstra Kazia Sliwkanich Sheila Ikram	Stavely High River Strome Tees Vermilion Sherwood Park Fairview
Farmhouse International Fraternity	\$100	Colin Strauss	Edmonton
4-H Foundation of Alberta	approx. \$325	Shari Bagozzi	Vulcan
George Pimm Memorial	approx. \$350	Penny Steffen	Grimshaw
Glen Bodell Memorial Scholarship	\$100	Jeanne DesRochers	Ardrossan
Harvest Trust Scholarship	approx. \$390	Stacey Sellers	Innisfree
Hoechst Canada Bursary	\$500	Daria Snow	Milk River
Inga Marr Memorial Scholarship	\$300	Heather MacLeod	Stavely
Ken Edgerton Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$375	Gail Roessler	Sexsmith
Lilydale Co-operative Scholarship	\$800	Candice Hueppelsheuser	Blackfalds
Marilyn Sue Lloyd Memorial	approx. \$175	Jimilee Carothers	Endiang
Minburn Wild Rose Scholarship	\$200	Cynthia Hlushak	Innisfree

Norma Jean Gray	\$1,000	Dana Vos Becky Tillotson Lori-Ann Konieczny Karla Laidlaw Heather Fawcett	Burdett Innisfree Innisfree Bow Island Consort
Pennington Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$500	Renn Breitreuz Chris Kennett	Onoway Barrhead
Peter Brouwer Memorial Scholarship	\$500	Aaron Grant	Bowden
"Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother" Scholarship	\$1,500	Deanna Brown Becky Mitchell Shannon Smith	Tofield Kitscoty High River
Ralph Cossey Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$250	Jodi Dahgren	Wainwright
Robert Sherwood Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$475	Jody Winder	Hay Lakes
Thomas Caryk Memorial Scholarship	\$300	Krista Lubeck	Worsley
TX Bar (1)	\$1,000	Karen Swanson	Milk River
TX Bar (2)	\$500	Heather Reti	Taber
TX Bar (3)	\$400	Svea (Jade) MacKenzie	Mountain View
United Farmers of Alberta	\$500	Tamara Logan Kimberly Tulloch	Lomond Lacombe
United Grain Growers Limited	\$500	Kimberley Hadwin	Consort
Vermilion River 4-H District Scholarship	\$200	Andrea Deaville	Paradise Valley
Walter Lipkewich Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$275	Merrilea Tillotson	Innisfree
Wetaskiwin District 4-H Heather Rasmuson Memorial Scholarship	approx. \$450	Greg Wedman	Wetaskiwin
Wetaskiwin District 4-H Scholarship	approx. \$450	Kenneth Wedman Perry Rasmuson	Wetaskiwin Gwynne
Wheat Board Surplus Monies Trust	approx. \$200	Scott Swanek Laura James Kurtis Hewson Carolyn Douglas Sharon Crawford Marcie Mandziuk Calvin Cassity	Lethbridge Okotoks Delia Lacombe Irma Thorhild Wembley
Woodgrove Unifarm Local Scholarship	approx. \$250	Wendy Williams	Gibbons

November 14, 1994

Domestic beef market an eye-opener for cattleman

Statistics are just numbers on a page of paper, at least until those numbers are translated into something you can see for yourself.

Gary Creelman, a cow/calf producer from Fairview and chair of the Alberta Cattle Commission's (ACC) market development committee, says he knew Alberta's single largest beef customer is Quebec. He knew the numbers; Alberta exports about one-third of its beef production every year to Quebec.

But, it wasn't until he saw that beef in Quebec meat counters, that the figures had a context. "I was overwhelmed," he says of seeing Montreal grocery stores and the volume of Alberta Beef they carry. "It totally opened my eyes," he adds. For example, one major Quebec chain brings in 1.6 million pounds of Alberta Beef every week.

Creelman's opportunity to see Alberta Beef in Montreal marketplaces came through a market development trip with Dave Rous, an Alberta Agriculture trade director.

"Our trip had two purposes," says Rous, "One was to meet with both current and potential Alberta Beef clients to show our sincere interest in maintaining and gaining market share in important markets for our province's beef industry. Second, as with all missions, we were gathering market information and intelligence on opportunities for beef, other meats and food products."

Rous makes regular trade trips through central and eastern Canada. Creelman is the second producer and ACC delegate that's joined him. Creelman says he wasn't sure what to expect from the experience. "As it turned out, I was warmly received and people we met with said how much they appreciated meeting a producer."

But more than that connection, Creelman says the trade mission gave him a new insight into marketing Alberta Beef. While globalization is a reality in the late 20th century, Creelman says Alberta beef producers shouldn't forget about important domestic markets. As a result, he adds, the ACC may want to look at re-focusing some of its market development resources.

In recent years the focus has been on international exports. While they remain important and have the potential to grow, as exports to the U.S. have, Creelman says domestic Canadian markets shouldn't be overlooked.

Alberta exports more beef to Quebec than to any other single market. Preliminary data for 1993 shows over 137,000 tonnes of Alberta beef carcasses and boxed beef, or 30.9 per cent of Alberta's total production, went to Quebec. The next largest export market is the U.S. Alberta's 1993 beef export total there was 83,081 tonnes, or 18.8 per cent, of provincial production. Albertans consume another 20 per cent of provincial beef production.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
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(formerly Print Media)

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Quebec spends about half a billion dollars annually on Alberta Beef, and Alberta supplies about 60 per cent of Quebec's beef consumption. "One of our advantages," says Creelman, "is that they like our meat."

Rous echoes that sentiment. "Alberta Beef is the beef of choice for Montreal retailers and food service outlets."

Creelman will report on this trade mission at the ACC's annual general meeting in early December. One recommendation he'll make is for producers to continue to be part of such trade trips, because he says, there's still more to learn.

Contact: Dave Rous Gary Creelman
(403)427-4241 (403)835-4645

Demand a positive in oilseed market

While large North American oilseed crops are an obvious price negative, the market also has some positives says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Good underlying demand for both canola and flaxseed should support prices," says Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch.

So should a favorable exchange rate for Japanese and European canola buyers, China's interest in both soybeans and canola, and Brazil buying unusually large quantities of U.S. soybeans.

"Plus, there's always the potential for the South American soybean crop to influence the market. All in all, there are number of factors still at work that will have some impact on oilseed prices over the next few months," says Dooley.

"Currently, there are some analysts who believe there's more downside risk in the canola market than upside potential," he adds. "Over the near term, I expect canola futures to trade within a fairly narrow range, with some modest downside possible."

Both canola and flaxseed futures showed good gains through October, despite a barrage of conflicting market news. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) October crop report increased its estimate of the U.S. soybean crop to a record 2.46 billion bushels (67 million tonnes). The Canadian canola crop was adjusted down from the July 31 estimate, but is still pegged at almost two million tonnes more than the previous record set in 1993.

Contact: Al Dooley
(403)427-5387

Wheat market still strong

Wheat prices should remain relatively attractive through the balance of the 1994-95 crop year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The wheat market is still fundamentally very strong," says Al Dooley, of the market analysis and statistics branch.

A drought stricken Australian crop continues to be downgraded in size. The U.S. wheat crop's size was adjusted downward by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in October. Statistics Canada lowered its national wheat crop estimate by half a million tonnes.

As well, the USDA estimates the global stock/use ratio is expected to be at its lowest level since 1960-61. "A good deal of the global stock decline is occurring in the major exporting countries," notes Dooley.

The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) supported the positive market view when it increased 1994-95 initial payments for wheat and amber durum in late October. "The increase of \$25 per tonne applies to all grades within the pool accounts," says Dooley.

"The September Pool Return Outlook (PRO) suggests significant final payments are still possible if there are no major changes to the global supply/demand situation over the coming months," he adds.

Continued decline of U.S. Enhanced Export Program (EEP) subsidies also support a positive price outlook.

"All this positive price news comes despite some recent price setbacks in U.S. futures markets," Dooley says.

Contact: Al Dooley
(403)427-5387

U.S. corn crop confirmed as record

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has confirmed what most analysts suspected, the 1994 U.S. corn crop was record large.

It's estimated at 9.6 billion bushels, or almost 244 million tonnes. Average yields were a remarkable 134 bushels per acre. "And, despite some substantial increases in both feed use and exports, ending stocks from the current crop year are forecast at more than double that of 1993-94," notes Al Dooley, of Alberta Agriculture's market analysis and statistics branch. Winnipeg feedgrain futures showed some independent strength in spite of the huge U.S. corn crop. "Tight holding by growers as a result of a positive market outlook and the possibility of having the crop accepted for malting purposes have supported the local barley market in particular," he adds.

The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) increased its initial payments for both feed and designated barley, by \$15 and \$25 per tonne respectively. "This increase reflects the improved market conditions generally for barley as a result of lower world production," he notes.

The Australian barley crop is drought-stricken, pushing it out of world markets, allowing Canada to make market inroads into China. European Union barley production is estimated at about three million tonnes below year ago levels.

"However, the huge U.S. corn harvest will put pressure on feedgrain prices," Dooley adds. "There's even talk of U.S. corn moving into southern Alberta. Local barley markets don't have much leeway before this starts to happen.

"As a result, we may be at a near-term top of the market, at least until corn prices strengthen, or feeding demand rises with the onset of more severe weather."

*Contact: Al Dooley
(403)427-5387*

Lower dollar does it in cattle markets

Stronger fed cattle prices from a late-October rally don't mean prices are out of the woods says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"There are encouraging signs, but there are still problems," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch. "Favorable pricing opportunities in the live cattle futures market may be short-lived, so take advantage of any fall or winter rallies."

The encouraging signs included consistently large U.S. slaughter volumes from mid-September on. Volumes averaged four per cent above 1993 levels. During this period, feedlot inventories in northern states, such as Nebraska, were depleted.

Slaughter weights also stabilized. "While average slaughter weights didn't decline in the U.S. during October, at least they didn't increase any further," notes Gietz. "In Canada, heavy carcass weights were a problem contributing to lower prices. Steer slaughter weights set a new all time high during the first week of October and declined slightly afterwards."

Demand also helped strengthen prices. The U.S. had strong export demand for high value cuts from Japan. As well, market talk noted plans for aggressive beef retail features in November.

"Canadian markets also benefitted from a slightly weaker Canadian dollar," adds Gietz.

In feeder cattle markets, Western Canadian prices were slightly lower during October. "For late fall and early winter, the price trend is sideways," says Gietz.

"Negative factors, such as the expected large market volume, could be balanced by an improvement in the fed cattle market and live cattle futures.

"If large numbers of calves are kept for backgrounding, heavy feeder cattle prices will remain on the defensive all winter," he adds.

Gietz says he expects bred heifers and other replacement cattle to trade well below last year's price levels. "When you're making purchasing decisions, be sure to factor in the distinct possibility of lower calf prices in 1995, and still lower prices in 1996," he advises.

*Contact: Ron Gietz
(403)427-5376*

Lamb prices to improve by Easter

Alberta slaughter lamb prices may rally to the \$100 per hundredweight (cwt.) level by next Easter says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"My forecast is based on an assumption that U.S. lamb feeders won't repeat the same mistakes two years in a row, which is no means a given," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"It seems unlikely there are any new inventory surprises waiting, but all the usual market risks are still there. They apply as does the value of the Canadian dollar," he adds.

Last winter U.S. flock liquidations went at a faster than expected pace, increasing short term supplies. U.S. lambs were also overfed. As well, assorted demand problems placed added pressure on U.S. prices early in 1994.

U.S. lamb production declined again in 1994, following a sharp reduction in 1993 compared to 1992 production. "Less production brought relative price strength. Lamb's production trend is in direct contrast to other meats as their production levels are expected to eclipse 1993 levels," says Gietz.

Gietz also reassures Canadian producers there hasn't been a flood of Oceanic imports into the U.S. replacing America production. In the first seven months of 1994, U.S. trade statistics show a seven per cent decline in imports from Australia and New Zealand.

Preliminary Canadian trade data, for the same period, indicates a three per cent drop in Oceanic lamb imports compared to 1993.

*Contact: Ron Gietz
(403)427-5376*

Pork prices face pressure

With U.S. pork production expected to reach a record high in 1995, pork prices could remain under pressure for some time says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) forecasts a 2.3 pound increase in per capital pork supplies in 1995. "That's a big negative for slaughter hog prices, particular as total meat supplies in the U.S. are likely to set new records," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"Although it's expected the current herd expansion will reverse with the substantial price drop, low corn prices may keep some producers in business a little longer," he adds.

U.S. pork production increased, especially in states outside of the traditional 16 hog producing states notes Gietz. North Carolina, now the number two hog growing state, led the way. Its year-to-year breeding herd increased by 31 per cent. Breeding herds in the non-traditional hog states on September 1 of this year were 13 per cent higher than the same time in 1993. Missouri is the third major growth region, with an 11 per cent breeding herd increase. Traditional hog states, such as Iowa and Illinois, show steady to slightly declining herds.

"The December 1 inventory should show any early indications of herd liquidation as a result of sharp price setbacks since August and gauge producer response to lower hog prices this fall," he says.

Alberta average Index 100 hog prices will drop slightly in December, to \$1.05 per kilogram (dressed) from a November average of \$1.10, predicts Gietz. He forecasts this average to return to the \$1.10 level in January. Prices are based on a 74 cent Canadian dollar.

*Contact: Ron Gietz
(403)427-5376*

Winter starts cold and wet

October started and ended with winter-like conditions and averaged out as slightly colder and a lot wetter than the norm says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"Alberta's October weather was cool and wet," notes Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch. "The average temperature was 0.3 degrees below normal and total precipitation was 71 per cent above normal."

These averages are based on data recorded at 59 Environment Canada climate stations across the province. The climate stations averaged 34.0 mm of precipitation, 14.1 mm above the 1961 to 1990 October average.

"Precipitation varied by region," adds Dzikowski. Most of the south was wet reporting between 30 and 110 mm of precipitation, varying from 120 to 400 per cent above normal. The wettest areas of the province were located in the extreme south.

"Cardston received the most precipitation during October, some 103.4 mm," he says. "A phenomenal 413 per cent of its long term average."

In contrast, most of the Peace region and central Alberta received precipitation amounts near normal. One exception was Lloydminster. Its 45.4 mm was more than double the October normal.

October began with winter-like weather in the south and hot sunny weather in the central and Peace regions. The first winter snow fell in the far south. Lethbridge received over 25 cm of snow. Then, sunny, warm weather returned to most of Alberta for about one week.

A cold front moved south through the central region on October 10 bringing about 10 to 20 cm of precipitation in it's path. The same front moved on to southern regions bringing between 20 to 40 cm of precipitation with it. Three days later, more rain and snow was reported in northeastern and southern regions.

"Sunny and windy conditions prevailed in most of the province for the last two weeks," says Dzikowski. The warm winds produced record high temperatures in northern and central Alberta.

As October ended, a winter snow storm hit both the Peace and central regions. Between 5 to 10 cm of precipitation were common.

The average monthly temperature for October was 4.8°C. The normal temperature for Alberta's 59 climate stations in October is 5.1°C. Southern regions and the foothills reported temperatures one to three degrees below normal. The central and Peace regions reported near normal to one degree above normal temperatures.

The warmest monthly average was Medicine Hat's 6.9°C, but it was still one half a degree below normal. At the other extreme, High Level reported the coldest monthly average temperature of 1.9°C. "However, that was slightly above its normal, by 0.8 degrees," he says.

For more information, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at (403)422-4385.

*Contact: Peter Dzikowski
(403)422-4385*

Alberta Agriculture appointments

New Red Deer-based district farm management specialist

Dean Dyck has joined Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development as a farm management specialist based in Red Deer.

He brings a dozen years experience in farm business analysis and management to his new position as a district specialist. His new job is to provide information and education on the business side of

Cont'd on page 5

farming to department customers. This includes business planning, financing, budgeting, estate planning and other business arrangements Dyck also champions a persistent attitude. "Success," he says, "is getting up one more time than you fall down."

After graduating with a BSc in agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan in 1982, Dyck spent three years as a farm production costs analyst in Regina. He then moved to a farm management specialist position in Rosetown where he stayed from 1985 through 1993. Most recently he worked as an agricultural business development co-ordinator. Dyck grew up on a family grain and hog farm near Borden, Saskatchewan.

Dyck can be reached at Alberta Agriculture's Red Deer district office at (403)340-7007.

Three new district specialists arrive in the Peace

Calvin Yoder, David Shortt and Dalin Bullock have been added to the roster of district specialists in Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's Peace region.

Yoder takes up duties as a forage crop specialist working out of the Falher office. The territory isn't new to him as Yoder has worked for the Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association (SARDA), which is based in Falher, since 1991.

"Calvin brings a lot of experience to his new job," says Jim Proctor, district office manager. "During his time with SARDA, Calvin was involved with forage research, including seed, feed and grazing. As well, he spent several summers working for the Lakeland Forage Association while earning his degree."

The Peace region's forage industry includes seed production, forage for livestock, alfalfa dehy, hay compaction for export and forage plowdown. "I'm looking forward to the challenges of serving all clients involved with different aspects of forage production and use," says Yoder.

Yoder can be reached at the Alberta Agriculture district office in Falher at (403)837-2211.

Another new crop specialist is in the Valleyview district office. David Shortt's specialty is cereal and oilseeds.

"We're delighted to have David join us as he brings very extensive experience and a high level of skills to this new position," says Proctor.

Shortt came to Valleyview from Saskatchewan. For the last two years he was an agricultural instructor at the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST). Before that, he spent several years working as a regional soils and crop specialist with Saskatchewan Agriculture.

Shortt can be reached in Valleyview at (403)524-3301.

Bullock, the third newcomer, is the marketing specialist based in the Grande Prairie district office.

"Dalin brings a solid education background and work experience to this position," says Proctor.

He has studied agriculture business, marketing and extension. Most recently, Bullock was marketing director of the Utah State University sheep operation. He was also a supervisor at Welling Alfalfa Cubing.

As part of his new job, Bullock will work with marketing clubs and other individuals and organizations throughout the region.

Bullock can be reached in Grande Prairie at (403)538-5285.

To call any Alberta Agriculture office toll-free, dial 310-000 to be connected to your nearest government RITE operator.

Are you concerned about your water rights?

by Wallace Daley

Farmers' Advocate of Alberta

[Editor's note: If you use this article, please use the byline.]

Rural Albertans have an opportunity right now that they shouldn't pass up — to present their thoughts and concerns about water rights and management to a committee reviewing a proposed Water Conservation and Management Act.

The current Water Resources Act will change. Proposed changes include reducing water allocated for household and related purposes, and a provision for transferable water rights. As well, the definition of *water body* could put even the smallest slough or dugout on your property under Crown authority. Licensing may also change. Many farmers and ranchers who don't have licenses now, may be required to get one.

These changes are found in a discussion draft of the proposed legislation. This draft act is the subject of public consultation meetings across the province. The meetings have been organized by a Water Management Review Committee. A schedule of the public meetings is available by calling 1-800-661-5586. [A list follows.]

If you'd like more information about the review process or a copy of the discussion draft, call the same number.

Written submissions can be made to the Water Management Policy and Legislation Review, Alberta Environmental Protection, 3rd Floor Oxbridge Place, 9820-106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2J6.

You can also contact the farmers' advocate's office in Edmonton at (403)427-2433.

The Farmers' Advocate of Alberta can help resolve disputes and act as a mediator. As well, the farmers' advocate can provide advice on a varied range of topics. You can call the farmers' advocate's office in Edmonton at (403)427-2433, toll-free through the nearest government RITE operator (310-000).30

Contact: Wallace Daley
(403)427-2433

Water management policy and legislation review – Public review sessions

Date	Location	Facility
Wednesday November 16	Medicine Hat	Cypress Centre 2055-21 Ave.
Thursday November 17	Brooks	Country Lodge 1119-2 St. W
Friday November 18	Lethbridge	El Rancho 526 Mayor Magrath Dr.
Friday and Saturday November 25 & 26	Calgary	Best Western Port'O Call 1935 McKnight Blvd NE
Monday November 28	Bonnyville	Agriplex
Wednesday November 30	Wainwright	Elks Hall 918-4 Ave.

Notes:

1. Meetings during the week run from 2 p.m. through 9 p.m.
2. Saturday sessions run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
3. Meetings will also be held at other locations during January and February, 1995. Locations include Grande Prairie, Grimshaw, High Level, Hinton, Fort McMurray and Edmonton.
4. For more information, contact the Water Management Policy and Legislation Review at 1-800-661-5586.

Agri-News briefs

Inaugural meeting Alberta Dried Flower Growers Association

A first-ever meeting of the Alberta Dried Flower Growers Association will be held in Edmonton on November 19. The meeting starts at 1 p.m. at Blooming Prairie, 10328-University (75) Avenue. Anyone interested in expanding Alberta's dried flower growers' market and working together to co-ordinate grower efforts, is encouraged to attend the inaugural meeting of the Alberta Dried Flower Growers Association. Pre-registration is preferred. A schedule of growing-for-profit classes is also available. For more information, contact Katie Benschoep at (403)431-1451 or fax (403)433-6440.

Regional differences in Alberta feeder cattle prices

Regional differences in feeder cattle prices were apparent in Alberta during October says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Central and northern sales were at times up to five dollars higher than southern Alberta prices," notes Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch. "An abundance of hay and no winter storms in northern regions may have been the reason for higher prices there," he adds. Export demand to the U.S. was rather weak given lower feeder cattle prices south of the border. "Often U.S. demand supports prices in the southern Prairies," he notes. For more information on livestock markets, contact Gietz in Edmonton at (403)427-5376.

Private land forestry workshop and field tour Nov. 18 & 19

A management options for privately owned wooded lands workshop and field tour runs November 18 and 19 in Drayton Valley. Woodlot owners and regional experts will talk about planning, inventory, regulations, marketing and other land uses. The workshop will explore the ways of managing forested land for financial returns while preserving the true values of the land. The \$30 fee includes lunches, coffee breaks, field tour and a copy of the new *Woodlot Management Guide*. The workshop is sponsored by the Alberta Forestry Association (AFA) and the Canada/Alberta Partnership Agreement in Forestry. To register, call the AFA in Edmonton at (403)428-7582.

Provincial poultry, rabbit and cavy show December 2-4

The 80th annual Alberta provincial poultry, rabbit and cavy show will be held December 2 through 4. The show runs at the Agricultural Pavilion at Calgary's Stampede Park. Top judges from throughout North America will choose prize winners in over 500 classes. Categories featured during the three-day event include bantams, covies, fancy pigeons, guinea fowl, homer pigeons, pheasants, poultry, rabbits, turkeys and waterfowl. There's also the world rooster crowing contest. Today (November 14) is the deadline for poultry and cavy exhibitors. November 23 is the entry deadline for rabbit exhibitors. For more information, contact Michel Higginbotham, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede agriculture department at (403)261-0114, toll-free at 1-800-661-1260 or fax (403)262-3067.

Grazing Alfalfa for Profit seminars in early December

Producers' renewed interest in grazing alfalfa prompted a series of three Alberta Forage Council sponsored seminars December 6 through 8. The seminars are December 6 in Mayerthorpe, December 7 in Rycroft and December 8 in Vermilion. Seminar programs include grazing strategies and economics, bloat management, direct seeding and alfalfa varieties. Keynote speakers are two Manitoba researchers. Paul McCaughey, of the Agriculture Canada research station in Brandon, speaks on grazing alfalfa for quality production. Martin Entz, of the University of Manitoba plant science department, will discuss cycling alfalfa through crop rotations. Local farmers will also be part of producer panels. Early registration, before December 2, is \$15 and \$20 after that date. Brochures and registration forms are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices as well as through the Alberta Forage Association. For more information, contact Laurel Aitken at (403)929-2019.

Fairview direct seeding workshop Dec. 6-7

A direct seeding workshop will be held in Fairview on December 6 and 7. The workshop will be held at the Dunvegan Inn. For more information, contact John Zylstra in Fairview at (403)835-2291.

November 21, 1994

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Dramatic changes to 18th annual child's farm safety guide

Four stories told in comic-book style will lead rural elementary school students through the 1994-95 *A Child's Guide to Farm Safety* and to the conclusion they too are responsible for farm safety.

"We are sure the children are going to love our new comic book format, and at 40-pages, this 18th annual edition is the longest we've had. Although the format is new, the guide is still built on the same successful foundation of children teaching children about farm safety through their own artwork and stories," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program. [See story on student winners.]

"To meet the tremendous demand, we printed more guides this year. Last year, the 40,000 we printed ran out in the first two weeks," he adds.

A total of 60,000 guides are available to rural schools. Order forms will be sent to rural school superintendents in January. Guides will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

The four stories in this year's guide feature machinery, animal, bale and chemical safety. These stories follow three familiar farm safety mascots: Flash, the safety sunspot; Louie, the lightning bug; and, Valerie, the valve.

"These three mascots represent the guide's sponsors, TransAlta Utilities and Nova Corporation," notes Kyeremanteng. "We're pleased these two farm safety partners are back with us again to bring the farm safety message to Alberta's rural school children."

The guide's subtitle and theme is *It's Up to Me*. Adventure stories, puzzles, games and tips reinforce the safety message. Student artwork and stories supplement both the activities and the four theme stories.

"Although adults play a role in making farms safer and teaching children about safety, the guide helps children learn they have a responsibility for their own safety," says Kyeremanteng.

"We hope the guide encourages children to make good safety decisions every day," he adds.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng Jacqueline Galloway
(403)427-2171 (403)427-2171

Student winners get farm safety scholarships

Christmas will come a little early this year for 23 rural Alberta elementary school students.

Each will receive a special prize during the first two weeks of December for their winning contribution to the 1994-95 *A Child's Guide to Farm Safety*. The exact prize will be revealed when the awards are presented at each winner's school. [A list of winners and a presentation schedule follows.]

"We've recognized our child's guide contributors in a number of ways over the years, but are very excited about this year's prizes.

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This Week

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MAP'95 early bird deadline January 11

Western Stock Growers support Canadian 4-H Foundation

Briefs

Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

And, we think both the students and their families will be excited, too," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program.

"Full credit goes to the guide's sponsors, TransAlta Utilities and Nova Corporation, for providing the unique recognition," he adds.

"As with other years, picking the student artwork and stories for the annual guide was tough work," says Jacqueline Galloway, an Alberta Agriculture farm safety consultant and the writer/producer of this year's 18th annual guide.

"There were many, many delightful entries, and we're continually amazed by the insight and creativity of these young students," she adds. "For example, there's a brief play about tractor safety and a story about aliens visiting a farm to learn farm safety rules."

Winning entries came from across the province, covered grade ones through six and included a variety of farm safety messages.

The guide's guiding principle is children teaching children.

Throughout its history, the child's guide has featured student work to highlight and supplement farm safety messages.

For more information on the scholarship presentations, contact Galloway in Edmonton at (403)427-2171.

Contact: *Jacqueline Galloway*
(403)427-2171

Solomon Kyeremanteng
(403)427-2171

1994 Child's Guide Scholarship Winners and Presentations Schedule

Dale Krahn	Ridgeview Central – La Crete	Wednesday, November 30	1:00 p.m.
Amanda Klemchuk	Whitelaw School – Whitelaw	Thursday, December 1	1:00 p.m.
Shawn Chonkolay	Springfield School – Peace River	Thursday, December 1	2:30 p.m.
Jaden Hein	Pipestone School – Pipestone	Friday, December 2	10:15 a.m.
Jill Moellering	Camilla School – Riviere Qui Barre	Friday, December 2	1:20 p.m.
Karla Dobush	Queen Elizabeth – Vegreville	Monday, December 5	9:30 a.m.
Heidi Pashulka	Vermilion Elementary – Vermilion	Monday, December 5	11:30 a.m.
Kristin Presley	Kitscoty Elementary – Kitscoty	Monday, December 5	1:00 p.m.
Mark Smith	Dapp School – Dapp	Tuesday, December 6	10:30 a.m.
Amara Dirks	WR Frose School – Fawcett	Tuesday, December 6	11:30 a.m.
Jared Reed	Whispering Hills – Athabasca	Tuesday, December 6	1:15 p.m.
Kristen Bradshaw	Grassland School – Grassland	Tuesday, December 6	2:30 p.m.
Amber Ferris	Racette School – St. Paul	Wednesday, December 7	11:15 a.m.
Jason Kalynchuk	Elk Point Elementary – Elk Point	Wednesday, December 7	1:00 p.m.
Curtis Faucher	Strome School – Strome	Thursday, December 8	10:30 a.m.
Jeffrey Peacock	Killam School – Killam	Thursday, December 8	11:30 a.m.
Abigail Stahl	Highland View – Hughendon Colony	Thursday, December 8	1:15 p.m.
Sunni Demchuk	Blackfalds Elementary – Blackfalds	Friday, December 9	11:30 a.m.
Jordan Wegenast	Forestburg School – Forestburg	Friday, December 9	2:30 p.m.
Laura Beierbach	St. Thomas Aquinas – Medicine Hat	Thursday, December 15	9:30 a.m.
Ashli Ott	Foremost Elementary – Foremost	Thursday, December 15	1:00 p.m.
Lucas Neamtu	Percy Pegler – Okotoks	Friday, December 16	10:45 a.m.

Note: The other winner was Elizabet Kovacs of Thorhild.

Agriculture trade office opens in Harbin

Alberta agriculture businesses now have a greater opportunity to explore potential markets in China with the help of Alberta's new trade office in Harbin.

"The focus of the office will be primarily for Alberta's agriculture companies that are seeking to expand their exports of goods and services into China," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister. "But the office will also be able to share resources to help Alberta companies in other industries establish better links in China."

The trade office will be run by Liu Hongmei, deputy section chief of Heilongjiang's Foreign Affairs Office. She has been seconded by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development as Alberta's commercial representative. Hongmei will work directly with the department to support Alberta food companies' market development activities. She will also promote exports of Alberta products such as forage, livestock and management services.

"Alberta's twinning relationship with Heilongjiang has led to an increasing number of Alberta agricultural service and commodity companies providing their expertise to develop China's agriculture industry," notes Paszkowski. "In particular, Alberta's companies have worked in this part of China to develop the area's natural advantage in producing forages, feed and livestock."

"Over the long term, Alberta hopes to work with China to develop a viable beef and processing industry in northeast China that could provide excellent opportunities to make further sales of Alberta technical products and services," he adds.

China is Alberta's third largest agriculture and food export market. To date, Alberta's agricultural exports have primarily been grains such as wheat and barley.

However, Paszkowski notes, potential exists for further sales in livestock, livestock genetics, forage seeds and turf seeds. Commercial sales of agricultural products and services have been limited in China, he adds, but the potential for greater sales has become increasingly apparent.

The trade office, officially opened November 1, is located in the Foreign Affairs Office of Heilongjiang in Harbin.

<i>Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus</i>	<i>Henry Ip</i>
<i>Executive assistants to the minister</i>	<i>Trade director</i>
<i>(403)427-2137</i>	<i>(403)427-4241</i>

Not just an old woman's disease

Osteoporosis isn't just an "old woman's" disease, it can strike all ages of either gender says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"While osteoporosis occurs more often among post-menopausal women and has been linked to decreased estrogen, that's just one factor for who can be at risk," says Linda St. Onge. "No single factor leading to osteoporosis has been identified."

Literally meaning "porous bones" and often called the brittle bone disease, osteoporosis causes bones to become lighter, more fragile and lacy inside like a honeycomb.

Eating habits, in particular calcium intake, are another link to the disease, Osteoporosis usually isn't seen in people with consistently high calcium intake.

Exercise, heritage and body types are three of the other major factors in the disease. "There is evidence that exercise stimulates new bone growth and idleness will actually contribute to bone breakdown," she says. "The exercise doesn't have to be complicated, even walking is enough."

Caucasians tend to develop osteoporosis more than blacks. Heredity also plays a role. If there is osteoporosis in your family, your risk is increased.

St. Onge also notes women who are slightly overweight seem to be more protected than those who are lean and slight. Petite women are more susceptible than taller women.

While there isn't a current treatment to restore lost bone, prevention is the best strategy. "Build solid bones with a high density of calcium when you are young — before you're 35. Use good nutrition with adequate calcium and exercise," she says.

Adults need about 800 mg of calcium daily. Calcium needs peak during the teen years at about 1,100 mg per day. School age children need 600 to 900 mg daily. Babies, three and under, need about 500 mg daily.

One cup of milk or yogurt, or one and one half ounces of cheese provide about 320 mg of calcium. "Broccoli and some other green vegetables also contribute calcium, although you'd need to eat about three cups of raw broccoli to get the same amount of calcium as what's in a cup of milk," says St. Onge. As well, this calcium isn't as easily absorbed as the calcium in milk products.

For people who don't like to drink milk, try other milk products such as yogurt. As well, milk or yogurt can be added to breakfast cereals and used in cooking soups and puddings.

"A number of lifestyle factors can increase the calcium loss in your body, so take care," she warns. These include cigarette smoking, excessive intake of aluminum type antacids, excessive caffeine intake, high protein intake, excessive fibre intake, high alcohol intake and excessive amounts of Vitamin D.

"It's also best to get your nutrients from the grocery store, not a drugstore," she adds. "While advertising may suggest supplements are an easy way to get calcium, their calcium content is generally low and they don't provide other essential nutrients."

Contact: Linda St. Onge
(403)427-2412

Calcium quick and easy in milk products

For decades research has shown calcium is an essential part of a healthy diet says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"Calcium is a very basic nutrient we all — children and adults — need every day for bones, teeth and other functions such as hormones and blood clotting," says Linda St. Onge.

Despite the important role calcium has, many Canadians don't get enough. In a recent survey of Nova Scotian eating habits, on average people only took in 75 per cent of the recommended daily amount of calcium.

Although many people can't get enough calcium, meeting calcium needs can be a simple matter. "The easiest way to get enough calcium every day is to drink milk, eat milk products and use foods made with milk," says St. Onge. "Most adults can get about half the calcium they need in a day from one glass of milk. Milk and milk products are easy sources because they contain large amounts of calcium," she adds.

For people who don't like drinking milk, they can "eat" milk by adding it to cream soups, hot and cold cereals, milk puddings and custards. As well, other dairy products, such as yogurt, cheese and cottage cheese, are excellent calcium sources. Technological advances have also allowed dairy products to go *lite*. "For people concerned about fat in their diets, there are a real variety of lower fat dairy products," notes St. Onge.

Foods other than milk products also contain calcium. Some vegetables — in particular, kale, collards and broccoli — are reasonably good sources of calcium, but you need to eat a lot of them. "To get the same amount of calcium that's in one glass of milk, you'd need to eat five cups of cooked broccoli," says St. Onge.

It is possible to meet calcium needs from vegetables, but it takes more planning and work. "To get a full day's calcium requirement in vegetables alone could mean eating over 10 cups of vegetables per day depending on the types chosen," she explains.

Almonds, sesame seeds, soybeans and tofu also contain some calcium. Generally speaking, however, the amount is quite small; meaning an average adult would have to eat large amounts in order to meet calcium needs. For example, a 35-year-old woman would need to eat up to 11 cups per day.

Growing children and pregnant and nursing mothers need more calcium than other people. Calcium is especially important for women because they are at more risk for osteoporosis, however women and men aged 50 and over need the same amount of calcium daily.

Adults need about 800 mg of calcium daily. Calcium needs peak during the teen years at about 1,100 mg per day. School age children need 600 to 900 mg daily. Babies, three and under, need about 500 mg daily.

While milk is the best source of calcium, for some people lactose maldigestion can make eating milk products difficult. People with lactose maldigestion don't make enough of an enzyme (lactase) to digest lactose, the sugar found naturally in milk. As a result, they may suffer from cramping, bloating and diarrhea after eating milk products.

"Only rarely do people with lactose maldigestion have to entirely avoid milk and milk products," says Susan Klaver, a registered dietitian and acting manager of the Dairy Nutrition Council of Alberta. "By making a few simple changes, many people with lactose maldigestion can still enjoy the benefits of calcium-rich dairy products."

"The missing enzyme can be added to milk, or people with a lactose maldigestion problem can eat firm cheeses, yogurt and small servings of milk with meals," notes St. Onge.

The Dairy Nutrition Council of Alberta has a fact sheet that explains the difference between lactose intolerance and a milk allergy. It also has tips on how to cope with lactose maldigestion without excluding milk products from your diet. The pamphlet is available in Alberta by calling the council at 1-800-252-7530.

Contact: Linda St. Onge Susan Klaver
(403)427-2412 (403)453-2196

Smart farming at MAP'95

Finance, marketing and other farm business management information at the 1995 *Managing Agriculture for Profit* (MAP) conference should help participants to dollar-smart farming.

"MAP'95, and its theme of *Smart farming*, follow in a tradition started in 1978 to provide forward-thinking farmers a conference with leading-edge information on farm business management," says Judy Shipley-Smith, chair of the MAP'95 organizing committee. Shipley-Smith is an Alberta Agriculture family business specialist based in Airdrie.

The three-day conference will run January 31 through February 2 in Red Deer. Conference brochures with complete program and registration information are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation offices.

MAP conferences blend theoretical and practical information on subjects related to farm business management, communication, financial planning, marketing, new technologies and trade. Expert speakers, from across North America, provide the information.

"We've made some format changes to allow participants a better opportunity to get to each type of session," notes Shipley-Smith.

There are three plenary sessions. Two kick-off the first two mornings of the conference and the other is a conference wrap-up speaker. All concurrent sessions, with exception of two, will be repeated.

Plenary speakers are Dick Dawson, Garnet Altwasser and Gordon College.

Dawson, who retired as vice-president of Cargill Canada in 1993 and is currently a Winnipeg-based consultant, will discuss emerging trends in global agriculture. Beefing up your markets is Altwasser's topic. Altwasser, co-founder of Lakeside Farm Industries of Brooks, will discuss marketing strategies, how Lakeside deals with producers and the role of research and development.

Gordon College, popular speaker at past MAP conferences, returns for a conference wrap-up session titled, *Breaking the Terror Barrier*. College, a family studies instructor at Lethbridge Community College, is noted for his humor and down-to-earth presentations on topics such as couple communication, parenting, stress management, esteem building strategies and marriage energizers.

"Gordon's presentation is about breaking through the barriers that tell you to stick to the known status quo. The conference is about new information, but it's not useful, unless people can apply their new knowledge," notes Shipley-Smith.

MAP'95 program topics include: balancing work and family, new environmental issues, managing business risk, the electronic highway, crop and livestock market outlooks, international trade developments, a Canadian economic outlook, capital gains savvy, financial freedom, team building, food safety, more dollars from your beef and crop insurance as a management tool.

Special evening activities include an opening night reception with humorous skits, an information trade fair and a finale banquet with Alberta singer/song writer Lesley Schatz.

"We encourage farm couples to attend the conference together, so offer rates for couples," says Shipley-Smith. There are single day and full conference individual and couple rates. [See separate story.] The early bird discount registration deadline is January 11.

Alberta Agriculture, in partnership with other organizations and companies, has presented an annual farm management conference since 1978. For the past three years, the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation, has been a project partner.

Contact: Judy Shipley-Smith
(403)948-8505

MAP'95 early bird deadline January 11

Registering for the full three-day 1995 *Managing Agriculture for Profit* (MAP'95) conference can save participants money, and so can registering as a couple.

"Farm couples can save 35 per cent by registering for the full three days of the conference," says Judy Shipley-Smith, chair of MAP'95. "Individuals can save 20 per cent by registering for the whole conference."

MAP'95 runs January 31 through February 2, 1995 in Red Deer. The conference provides leading-edge information to forward-thinking farmers.

A three-day package for a couple is \$347 and for one person, \$214. "This compares to \$535 and \$267.50 respectively by combining the day rates," notes Shipley-Smith.

Day rates are available. On January 31 and February 1, the cost is \$96.30 per person or \$192.60 per couple each day. The February 2 rate is \$74.90 per person and \$149.80 per couple.

All registration rates include GST and meals. Transcripts of day three outlook sessions are also included in the conference price.

Special hotel rates are available at the conference hotel, the Capri Centre. Some non-smoking rooms are available. Accommodation is also available at the Black Knight Inn and the Red Deer Lodge.

"There's also a prize for registering early," notes Shipley-Smith. "Early bird registrants, before January 11, 1995 are eligible, for a draw for a cellular telephone."

Conference brochures with complete program and registration information are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation offices.

Contact: Judy Shipley-Smith
(403)948-8505

Western Stock Growers support Canadian 4-H Foundation

Canada's oldest beef organization is supporting Canada's national 4-H council through a special fund-raising project.

The Western Stock Growers' Association (WSGA) has donated a calf that will eventually be sold at the *4-H On Parade* achievement day in Calgary on June 4, 1995. Sale proceeds will go to the Canadian 4-H Foundation. The foundation is the fund-raising arm of the national council.

The fund-raising project recognizes two events. In 1995 the Canadian 4-H Council will hold its annual meeting in Alberta. Also next year, the WSGA will begin celebrating its centennial.

"The national council meets in Alberta every 11 years, and we wanted to mark the occasion with a special project," says Ted Youck, head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch.

"It's a unique project for 4-H in Canada," he adds. "But is typically Albertan, as it combines a beef industry that's second to none with the industry's oldest organization."

Youck, along with Greg Hawkwood, president of the Calgary Regional 4-H Council, pitched the idea to the WSGA in late summer. Now the donated calf is being fed along with the Hawkwood family's 4-H calves.

"The Stock Growers' certainly have been supporters of the 4-H movement. Generations of our membership have been 4-H members, leaders and judges. We're also pleased to be part of this project as we begin celebrating our 100th anniversary," says Welding Kolstad, WSGA president.

The June 4 sale date coincides with the final day of the Canadian 4-H Council's annual meeting. The meeting runs May 31 through June 4, 1995 at Kananaskis.

"Council members will attend the *4-H on Parade* show on June 3 and have an opportunity to meet with Alberta 4-H members and leaders. The next evening, the cheque from the auction will be presented to the Canadian 4-H Foundation president," notes Youck.

All the money raised from the calf sale will go to 4-H member and leader development across Canada. The national 4-H council organizes and co-ordinates national and international conferences, exchanges and scholarships with a focus on citizenship, leadership development, agricultural careers, technology transfer and other rural issues.

"The annual meeting's organizing committee is also pleased that the Unifeed Division of United Grain Growers (UGG) has agreed to supply feed for this special calf," says Youck.

For more information on the 1995 Canadian 4-H Council annual meeting, contact Youck in Edmonton at (403)422-4444.

For more information about the WSGA's centennial celebrations, contact Rhonda Clark, WSGA centennial co-ordinator, in Calgary at (403)250-9121.

<i>Contact: Ted Youck</i>	<i>Bob Boulton</i>	<i>Rhonda Clark</i>
<i>(403)422-4444</i>	<i>(403)773-2144</i>	<i>(403)250-912</i>

Agri-News briefs

Pulse Growers annual meeting December 5-7

Zone two of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission is hosting the provincial organization's annual meeting next month. The meeting is December 5 through 7 at the Westin Hotel in Edmonton. Sessions start on December 6 with keynote speaker Dick Dawson. Former vice-president of Cargill Canada, Dawson is now a consultant. Also on day one's agenda are: a marketing panel; production equipment; and, a discussion of seed, fertility, diseases and herbicides. Day two features a bear pit sessions on peas, beans and lentils. Pre-registration is \$90 per person, or \$160 with a spouse. At the door, registration is \$100 per person, or \$175 with a spouse. To pre-register, contact the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission at Box 2258, Taber, Alberta, T0K 2G0, or call (403)223-8004.

Direct seeding – and a few other things – at Fairview workshop

A two-day direct seeding workshop will cover more than direct seeding concepts and technology says co-ordinator John Zylstra. The workshop is December 6 and 7 in Fairview. Day one topics include: sustainable agriculture, the value of top soil and direct seeding; the economics of conservation tillage; what happens to fuel consumption and labor; fertility in direct seeding; crop residue and equipment; and, weed control. Day two has an opening plenary session on the topic of water, wetlands and climate and whether the greenhouse effect is real. Select-a-sessions follow. Topics include: sod seeding and forage in rotation; wetlands and the North American Water Management Plan; dugout management and small watersheds; GPS, precision farming; openers and airseeders; farm planning with aerial photos; peas in direct seeding; and, crop residue management for disease control. Registration is at the door. The two-day rate is \$18, and one-day is \$10. For more information, contact Zylstra in Fairview at (403)835-2291.

Olds College composting centre running

Composting methods research has begun at Olds College with the start-up of the Composting Technology Centre. The centre will demonstrate composting technology for homes and industries as well as provide innovative training opportunities. The centre is one of a very few in North America. "We are very excited to develop a research facility such as this to learn how to handle waste more efficiently and effectively," says Tom Clark, the compost project manager. "Composting can provide considerable relief to our garbage crisis...and composting has significant value as a soil amendment. Demonstrating this value will be an important aspect of the centre's focus," he adds. Project partners include the town of Olds, industry such as Proctor & Gamble, and Alberta Environmental Protection's Action on Waste Program. In related news, Clark has also been named as a director of the Composting Council of Canada. He says his appointment is a natural fit with the new Olds centre. "The college is very visible across Canada right now because of our intended research and development initiatives. In fact, the goals and objectives the college is working on through the new centre align themselves quite well with those that we are trying to accomplish across Canada through the council." For more information, contact Clark in Olds at (403) 556-4644.

New events at Agribition

New events have been added to all the major areas of the Canadian Western Agribition. Agribition runs November 26 through December 2 in Regina. Among the new events are: a first ever international heavy horse pull sponsor auction; grain and forage show enhancements; new purebred beef cattle sweepstakes and jackpot shows; and, the debut of Agri-Ed Town at the Agri-Ed Showcase. Agribition includes 17 purebred cattle breed shows plus dairy cattle, sheep, bison, swine and horse shows, sales and competitions; a trade show; international 4-H judging seminar; professional rodeo; stock dog trials; grain and forage show; cowboy poetry; and, the national Outstanding Young Farmer program. For more information, contact Tammy Halpenny, marketing co-ordinator in Regina at (306) 565-0565.

AGRI-NEWS

November 28, 1994

Biotech education awareness project grows

More players have joined the team and the Western Canadian Agricultural Education Council's first project's game plan is in motion.

The agrifood biotechnology awareness project includes a video for secondary school students plus other resources including a guide to the complete package.

The centrepiece video is in a polishing the script phase. A hands-on part of the project is also in development. The Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research station in Lethbridge will provide a hands-on biotechnology experience for 1995 Summer Agricultural Education Institute participants. [See separate story.]

"Two new partners have joined the project and their contributions have put us within \$6,000 of our fund raising project," says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture agricultural awareness specialist and a founder of the Western Canadian Agricultural Education Council.

"But we wouldn't mind going over the target, as that will allow us to include more multi-media components in the teaching resources," she adds.

The Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen and Ag-West Biotech, a Saskatoon biotechnology company, are the project's latest partners. Other supporters include the National Institute of Biotechnology, Alberta Pool and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

Alberta, British Columbia and Manitoba education departments have already endorsed the project. A co-operative advisory committee from the four western province's Agriculture in the Classroom programs will review the materials and distribute the final package.

"The basis of this awareness project is to make people more comfortable with new technology," says Gabert, "to explain its uses, benefits and safety. Exposure to the science may also be opening a door to future careers for students."

Biotechnology includes any technique that uses living organisms to make or modify products, to improve plants or animals, or to develop micro-organisms for specific uses. Among biotechnology's

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tools and techniques are protein engineering, cell fusion, recombination DNA and increasingly efficient fermenters.

For more information about the council and the biotechnology project, contact Gabert in Edmonton at (403)427-2171.

Contact: Betty Gabert
(403)427-2171

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

Biotech theme at '95 Summer Ag Ed Institute

Get in the application line-up now is the advice the 1995 Summer Agricultural Education Institute's co-ordinator has for Alberta teachers.

"Biotechnology is the 1995 theme and next year's institute offers, science teachers in particular, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," says Betty Gabert. Gabert is an Alberta Agriculture agricultural awareness specialist and co-ordinator of both the institute and Alberta's Agriculture in the Classroom program.

The institute will continue to have 30 spots for teacher-participants. Another seven places have been added to the 1995 enrolment. One is for an Australian guest. Six other spots will be for out-of-province delegates, two from each of the other western provinces. These participants are part of the Western Canadian Agricultural Education Council's biotechnology project.

Brochures and application forms for the 1995 Institute will be available early in the new year, however interested teachers can call Gabert in Edmonton at (403)427-2171 now.

The institute is a full-credit, fourth year agricultural awareness and curriculum development course designed for teachers and fourth year education students. The eight-day institute gives its students an intensive, hands-on look at the industry. In 1995, the institute will be in Lethbridge July 16 through 23.

"The 1995 host, Lethbridge Community College, also hosted the very first institute in 1990," notes Gabert. The institute is a joint project of Alberta Agriculture, the University of Lethbridge, UFA and the college host. Agricultural colleges around the province – Olds, Lakeland and Fairview – have all hosted the institute. UFA is a major institute sponsor. The Alberta company provides scholarships for the 30 teacher-participants.

"The institute wouldn't have been possible without tremendous support from the agriculture and education communities," notes Gabert. "New supporters join us every year, and every year we see exciting new agricultural awareness projects from institute graduates."

The institute is also a basis for a provincial agricultural ambassador program. The program's goal is a teacher ag ambassador in every Alberta school. These ambassadors serve as a link between their colleagues and the Agriculture in the Classroom program and other agricultural and agricultural awareness organizations.

For more information about the Summer Agricultural Education Institute, the Western Canadian Agricultural Education Council, the Agriculture Ambassador program or Agriculture in the Classroom, contact Gabert in Edmonton at (403)427-2171. The call is toll-free through the nearest RITE centre, call 310-0000.

Contact: Betty Gabert
(403)427-2171

Ag offices closed through Christmas season

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development offices, like other provincial government offices, will be closed between Friday, December 23 and Tuesday, January 3, 1995.

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's headquarters offices in Edmonton will close, as will all district and regional offices, at the end of the day on December 22. They will re-open on the morning of January 3.

As well, all the offices of the Alberta Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) will be closed for the same time period.

The closures are part of a provincial government plan to reduce payroll costs. An estimated \$17 million will be saved from the Christmas closure. Employees receive the unpaid days off as part of a five per cent pay reduction.

"Essential services will be maintained as they are during any holiday period," says Les Lyster, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development field services assistant deputy minister.

"In the case of our department, that means provincial meat inspection will continue," he adds.

Lyster says the closure period is a traditionally quiet time, so the closure's impact should be minimal for the department's customers. "We hope by letting people know about the closures, that they won't be inconvenienced and can make better plans or arrangements to use our department's services."

Other provincial governments, including Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba, also use unpaid days to reduce payroll costs.

Contact: Les Lyster
(403)427-2440

Biotechnology's link to sustainability at conservation workshop

Biotechnology's possible impacts on the agricultural industry, farmers and consumers is one agenda topic at the opening day of Alberta's provincial conservation workshop and the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) annual meeting.

The annual workshop is February 23 through 25 at Red Deer's Westerner Park. Day one features the keynote address on opportunities and challenges in sustainable agriculture, plus four plenary speakers. Gary Stringam, a University of Alberta plant science professor, is one of those four.

Stringam will discuss the biotechnology revolution. He specializes in canola breeding research including its biotechnological aspects. He's worked for Agriculture Canada in Saskatchewan and also as an oilseeds advisor in Pakistan.

"Professor Stringam will discuss how many conventional technologies will be replaced in coming years by new biotech techniques and products, and how biotech aims at more efficient agricultural production," says Peter Gamache, workshop co-ordinator.

"Part of his talk will examine the possible effects biotechnology will have on sustainability," adds Gamache.

Other plenary topics are precision farming, the Alberta public's view of the agricultural industry, information acquisition, biodiversity on the farm and watershed assessment.

All concurrent sessions are offered four times during the workshop. Those topics include weed control in reduced tillage, a variety of direct seeding and forage topics, fertilizer efficiency, pulse crops and opportunities for farm diversification.

The final day is *Direct Seeding Saturday*. It includes speakers and equipment displays.

Full workshop registration packages include admission to the associated Farm Progress Days trade show. The trade show features the latest in direct seeding equipment in an 80,000 square foot indoor display space. As well, ACTS holds its 17th annual meeting and the Alberta Forage Council its annual meeting on February 24.

"A variety of registration packages are available," notes Gamache. "There are also early bird discounts before January 15."

Full registration is \$120 per person or \$160 per couple before January 15. After that date, it's \$150 per person and \$190 per couple. There are also two-day, single-day and student rates.

The provincial workshop is presented by ACTS, Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch, and the Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Agreement (CAESA). For more information, contact Gamache in Edmonton at (403)422-4385, or ACTS executive manager Russ Evans at Box 1, Site 9, R.R. 5, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2G6 or (403)936-5306.

Conference information is available from regional conservation co-ordinators, municipal agricultural fieldmen and all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Contact: Peter Gamache Russ Evans
(403)422-4385 (403)936-5306

Queen Mother Scholarships awarded for final time

Three former Alberta 4-Hers are the 1994, and the last, winners of the prestigious Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother scholarships.

Deanna Brown of Tofield, Becky Mitchell of Kitscoty and Shannon Smith of High River each received the \$1,500 scholarships recognizing their academic achievements, leadership abilities and community contributions.

The Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother scholarship was established in 1985. The Alberta government presented the

scholarship as a gift to the Queen Mother when she attended the World Angus Forum in Edmonton. The scholarship was given a 10-year lifespan.

"The scholarship recognizes and assists deserving young Albertans who study agriculture, human ecology or veterinary medicine (large animal). First through fourth year students are eligible," notes Elaine Ash, 4-H scholarship co-ordinator.

Brown is her third year of a BSc. in conservation and environmental sciences at the University of Alberta. During her nine years as a member of the Tofield Multi club she served in all executive positions. She was also a Grant McEwan Conservation Award winner in 1990.

Mitchell is in the first year of the University of Saskatchewan's bachelor of agriculture program. Mitchell was involved with 4-H for eight years as a member of the Kitscoty 4-H Beef club. She excelled academically and was very active in her community.

Smith is also a third year conservation and environmental sciences student at the University of Alberta. She was a member of the Gladys/Blackie Heartwarmers for eight years and served in many club executive positions.

Alberta Agriculture sponsored the scholarship. It was administered by the department's home economics and 4-H branch and given out in the name of Her Majesty, the Queen Mother.

Contact: Elaine Ash Arron Madson
422-4444 422-4444

On ALeRT for animal care

Producers are helping producers through the Alberta Foundation for Animal Care's (AFAC) new ALeRT program.

Since its launch in June, ALeRT has responded and resolved six cases, producer-to-producer through successful, non-confrontational action.

ALeRT includes an action line producers and the public can use to report concerns about livestock and poultry care. The toll-free Animal Care ALeRT line number is 1-800-506-CARE(2273). Calls reported on the line are confidential.

A trained producer-member resource team follows up calls. The team helps resolve issues of unacceptable animal care through plans of action based on codes of practice and follow-up consultation.

"As an AFAC founding member, Alberta Agriculture certainly encourages producers and other concerned people to report their concerns," says Ray Fenton, an Alberta Agriculture veterinarian and head of the department's animal welfare unit.

"ALeRT is there not only for producers, but also people who transport livestock, staff at auction markets, processors and the general public," he adds.

Animal Care ALeRT's goal is prevention says AFAC's Susan Kitchen. "Ideally, we want to be involved before neglect becomes abuse," she says. "Hopefully, that will reduce the number of cases requiring intervention by the SPCA," she adds. ALeRT acts in co-operation with the Alberta SPCA.

Canadian livestock and poultry producers do have codes of practice. The voluntary guidelines cover all elements in the care and handling of farm animals. They were developed by industry organizations in consultation with the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada.

AFAC's founding members include Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Alberta Egg Producers Board, the Alberta Hatching Egg Marketing Board, the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation, the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission, the Alberta Milk Producers, the Alberta Chicken Producers, the Alberta Turkey Growers' Marketing Board, the Western Stock Growers' Association and Unifarm.

Concerns about treatment of pets, should be reported directly to the Alberta SPCA or a local Human Society.

For more information about either AFAC or the ALeRT line, contact Kitchen in Calgary at (403)777-0445, fax (403)777-0447 or write Cambrian P.O. Box 75028, Calgary, AB, T2K 6J8.

*Contact: Susan Kitchen
(403)777-0445*

Agri-News briefs

Barley Commission 3rd annual meeting December 1

Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister, will officially open the Alberta Barley Commission's third annual meeting in Red Deer's Capri Centre on December 1. Meeting topics include marketing tools and strategies, future direction of the barley industry and a barley marketing debate. Registration starts at 8 a.m. Luncheon space is limited and costs \$10 per person. To pre-register, call the commission toll-free at 1-800-265-9111.

Eastern organizations host '95 provincial Rural Crime Watch workshop

Seven eastern Alberta Rural Crime Watch associations are co-operatively hosting the 1995 *Provincial Rural Crime Watch Workshop* at Lakeland College in Vermilion February 3 and 4. The workshop theme is Crime Prevention – it's everybody's business – are you on side. For more information, contact Carrie Frederick in Vermilion at (403)853-2401, or Cliff Munroe in Edmonton at (403)427-4241.

Field research studies design and analysis workshop

The University of Saskatchewan's extension division is holding a field research studies design and analysis workshop December 7 through 9 in Saskatoon. The workshop is designed to present agricultural researchers with concepts and appropriate application of various types of experimental design and analysis techniques. It will also cover the most common problems in field research trial design and analysis. December 9 is an optional day for participants. It's devoted entirely to Statistical Analysis System (SAS), a computer software program. For more information, call Grant Wood, extension division, at (306)966-5586 or fax (306)966-5567.

Two more native grass varieties released

The Alberta Environmental Centre (AEC) has developed and released two new native grass varieties for reclamation use at high elevations. Both AEC Hillcrest awned wheatgrass and AEC Blueridge alpine bluegrass are Canadian firsts. Respectively, they are the first varieties of awned-type slender wheatgrass and alpine blue grass to be developed in Canada. Both were developed especially for reclaiming disturbed sites in Alberta's foothills and mountains. AEC Hillcrest was developed from a single plant collected near Hillcrest in southern Alberta. AEC Blueridge was derived from a single plant collected in 1985 at a site near the Alberta-British Columbia border. Both were extensively tested for six years at various plains and mountain sites including the Columbia Icefields, Sunshine Village and Mountain Park. Demand for reclamation grasses comes from land disturbed for activities including natural resource extraction, forestry, recreation, and railway and road construction. AEC Hillcrest will be marketed by Peace Valley Seeds Ltd. and AEC Blueridge by Prairie Seeds Ltd. The AEC released its first native grass variety, AEC Highland slender wheatgrass, in 1993. Other reclamation native grass varieties will be developed from a species collection taken from 300 sites on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains. For more information, contact Dr. Barb Darroch at (403)632-8209 or Jay Woosaree at (403)632-8219 at the AEC in Vegreville.

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AGRI-NEWS

December 5, 1994

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Fall soil moisture picture dry, but not severe

While most of the province is dry, fall soil moisture conditions are rated as moderate says Alberta Agriculture's soil moisture specialist.

"Conditions on November 1 showed moisture levels were dry or extremely dry in 62 per cent of Alberta's agricultural area, however only three per cent of that total was in the very low category," says Allan Howard of the conservation and development branch.

Soils in the very low moisture category have no significant moisture reserve, and at best a shallow layer of surface moisture. Moisture reserves in low category soils can't sustain crop growth for more than a few days.

"That's not as severe as conditions were in 1990 and 1991 and are moderate relative to the 15-year record we have of fall soil moisture conditions," he adds.

The driest areas this fall are in the Peace River region, northeastern Alberta, the east central area and southeastern Alberta. [See map page 3.] "Average or above average snowfall and favorable snowmelt will be needed to produce sufficient spring moisture reserves for crops in these areas," notes Howard.

High drought risk conditions, the very low soil moisture category, aren't extensive, but in pockets throughout eastern Alberta. Well-above normal precipitation during October in southern Alberta prevented more widespread areas of high drought risk conditions.

About six per cent of Alberta soils were rated with a high moisture level. They were found in the Edmonton-Red Deer corridor and in pockets near Grande Prairie, Whitecourt and Cardston. Although these conditions are generally ideal for both crops and surface water supplies, adverse snowmelt with excessive runoff could delay field work and make seeding late.

Just less than one-third of the province, 32 per cent, has a medium soil moisture level rating. Central Alberta's rating was mostly in this category. Moderate conditions were also extensive in the Athabasca-Slave Lake area, the far south and the western Peace. Pockets of moderate conditions were also near Cold Lake, Medicine Hat and the southwestern foothills.

Medium-rated moisture levels generally are sufficient for average crop yield with average growing season conditions.

"Fall stubble soil moisture is only an after-harvest, before freeze-up picture of soil moisture conditions. What happens over the winter is a better indication of spring conditions," says Howard.

"Precipitation between spring thaw and seeding is the best bet to substantially improve soil moisture conditions."

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

For example, average winter precipitation and favorable snowmelt commonly improve soil moisture conditions by one category. A warm, dry winter would likely expand the very low moisture areas and reduce seedbed moisture in all parts of the province.

Howard offers farmers a tip on conserving soil moisture. "Keeping standing stubble in fields traps snow, prolongs snow cover and reduces the risk of dry seedbeds."

The provincial fall soil moisture map is based on computer modelling supported by sampling stubble field moisture and analysis of crop data. Additional information on local variability and changes in moisture levels between sampling dates and November 1 is provided by Alberta Agriculture district and regional staff.

For more information, contact Howard in Lethbridge at (403)381-5861.

Contact: *Al Howard*
(403)381-5861

Farm fuel registration renewal deadline

Alberta Agriculture advises farmers to get their Alberta Farm Fuel Benefit registration number renewal forms in by December 15.

"Farm fuel numbers not renewed by December 31 will be cancelled. The application deadline is December 15, so the renewal can be processed," notes Dale Dowswell, program administrator.

Registration renewal forms were mailed to 60,000 Alberta producers in July. Some 15,000 final reminders were mailed in November. "The renewal process has gone well," says Dowswell, "However, it's been four years since the last renewal, and while many producers haven't moved, their mailing addresses have changed. We want to make sure everyone who needs a renewal form gets one.

"Any producer who currently has a farm fuel registration number, but hasn't received a renewal form should contact the registration office in Edmonton," he adds. The call is toll-free at 1-800-232-7378.

Farmers who just registered in 1994 will automatically be renewed as their farm operation likely hasn't changed.

After the December 31, bulk fuel dealers and vehicle registry offices will be advised which producers are no longer eligible for the farm fuel benefit.

The tax exemption portion of the Farm Fuel Benefit program allows farmers to purchase marked fuel without paying the nine cent per litre provincial fuel tax. The Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance reduces the cost of marked diesel fuel by another six cents per litre.

Contact: *John Larson* *Dale Dowswell*
(403)422-0015 (403)422-9167

Green Certificate level three training starts in January

Green Certificate's agriculture business management training will begin in four locations in mid-January.

The level three training begins January 12 and 13 and runs through March 23 and 24. Courses are all-day, from 9 a.m. through 4 p.m., Thursday and Friday every second week. Course locations are Lethbridge, Airdrie, Lacombe and the Edmonton area.

The rewritten and designed level three course was offered for the first time last winter. "This year is another first. Besides being open to graduates of level two training, we've opened the course up to all owner and operators of farm and horticulture businesses who want to analyze and improve their business management abilities," says Erin Inglis, course co-ordinator.

Course participants will learn how to apply general business management principles; calculate business cash flows, financial statements and ratios; select an optimum production mix; practise better human resource management; and, apply marketing and purchasing principles to their operation.

Like level one and two Green Certificate training, the course is designed by the agricultural industry and is practical. Unlike the other levels, level three training is mostly off-farm. "However, the *homework* applies to each person's particular business operation," notes Inglis.

Tuition is \$175. Brochures and registration forms are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices. Forms and more information are also available from the Green Certificate office in Edmonton at (403)427-2171 (toll-free through your nearest RITE operator at 310-0000), or the Horticulture Human Resource Council in Okotoks at (403)938-6683.

Contact: *Erin Inglis*
(403)427-2171



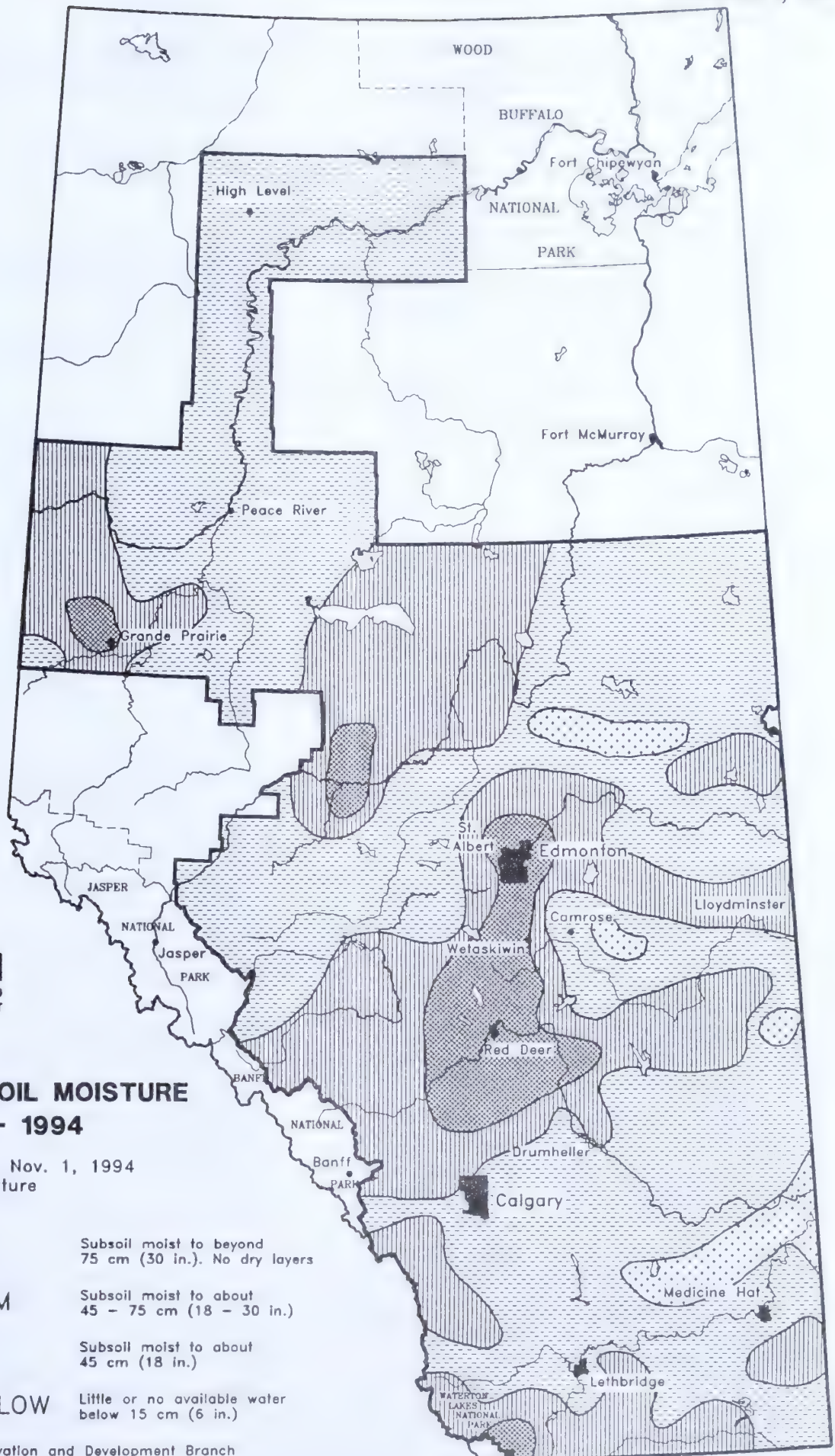
Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

STUBBLE SOIL MOISTURE FOR FALL - 1994

Estimated as of Nov. 1, 1994
Medium Soil Texture

	HIGH	Subsoil moist to beyond 75 cm (30 in.). No dry layers
	MEDIUM	Subsoil moist to about 45 - 75 cm (18 - 30 in.)
	LOW	Subsoil moist to about 45 cm (18 in.)
	VERY LOW	Little or no available water below 15 cm (6 in.)

Compiled by Conservation and Development Branch



High production at Green Certification training farms

Green Certificate training is a two-way street says the supervisor of Alberta Agriculture's farm training program.

"While the trainee is learning and gaining skills, the farm trainer's operation also benefits from being part of the Green Certificate program," says Robert Hornbrook.

"Recent analysis shows Green Certificate training farm production parameters compare very favorable to those on a typical Alberta hog farm," he adds.

	Provincial Averages	Green Certificate farms
Number of sows	230	244
Pigs sold/sow/year	17.6	20.08
Litters/sow/year	2.19	2.29
Farrowing interval	167 days	155 days
Mortality birth to sale	14%	15.13%
Days to market	174	162

The Green Certificate training farm data is from a telephone survey. Provincial average information was taken from the Alberta Hog Enterprise Production Economics Research Branch.

For example, Green Certificate farms average more pigs sold per sow per year — 20.08 compared to 17.6 — than the provincial average. [See table.]

"While our telephone survey didn't ask questions about revenues and costs, it's reasonable to believe that good management practices arising from Green Certificate training involvement could improve productivity and in turn lead to increased profits," says Hornbrook.

The Green Certificate program has three levels of training in seven different farming enterprises. The trainee is an apprentice who learns practical, hands-on skills on the farm. This is supplemented by some classroom work.

Level one is basic technical training. Level two moves on to production management and supervisory training. The final level is farm business management. Green Certification training is available in cow-calf, dairy, feedlot, swine farrow-to-finish, sheep, field crop and irrigated crop production.

Industry needs shape Green Certificate curriculum. Farmers also do the testing to ensure trainees can do what they know.

More information about the Green Certificate program is available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices. This includes a 14-minute video describing the program and how it works.

Or for more information, contact the farm training office in Edmonton at (403)427-2171, toll-free through your nearest RITE centre at 310-0000.

Contact: Robert Hornbrook
(403)427-2171

Riding through the horse business

Riding and business themes are the common threads in the 1995 *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* in Red Deer January 13 through 15.

"As is the custom, the conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. Riding and equine business topics will dominate in all four," says Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist.

"While specific programs are offered, if you're registered at the conference you can attend whatever session you want to," he adds. Conference participants also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

Among the specific riding-related topics are warm up and cool down; developing the mind and body for balance and unity; the differences between female and male riders and what to do with it; bits and biting; and, the value of a versatile horse.

Business subjects include using forages in horse rations, maximizing foaling rates, the business of pinhooking, using transported semen, insurance requirements for horse operations and setting up a horse business.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America. "It's also the only one of its kind in Canada," notes Coleman.

Registration rates are also reasonable. Conference registration is \$75 per person, and \$50 for each additional person from the same farm. "Our rates are something that have stayed the same over the last few years," says Coleman.

There's an added bonus for pre-registration. Registrants who pre-pay are eligible to win two nights accommodation with dinner and breakfast for two at either the Timberline Motel in Banff or Red Deer Capri Centre, plus \$100 spending money.

The conference is a joint project of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry section, the Alberta Arabian Horse Breeders Association, the Alberta Quarter Horse Breeders Group and the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (Alberta Division).

For more information about the conference, contact Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096 or Les Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Bob Coleman
(403)427-5096

Les Burwash
(403)948-8532

SPCA sponsor Horse Breeders and Owners Conference speaker

One of the 1995 *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* speaker's is sponsored by the Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).

Andrew Clarke, director of the University of Guelph's Equine Research Centre, is a speaker in the *Fred Pearce Memorial Speaker Series*. He's a featured presenter at the *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* January 13 through 15 in Red Deer.

Clarke's topic is causes and prevention of respiratory problems in horses. "Dr. Clarke will share his extensive knowledge on this subject with conference participants," says Les Burwash, of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry section.

Clarke has been director of the Guelph research centre since 1991. His educational background is from both Australia and Britain. He has been involved with numerous research projects related to equine respiratory problems. He's also written and co-written over 60 technical papers related to the respiratory system and health of the horse. Clark also had private mixed veterinary practice for four years in Melbourne, Australia.

Clarke's plenary presentation starts the third day, January 15, of the conference. He'll discuss signs of Lower Respiratory Tract Inflammation (LRTI) and environmental control of respiratory problems and disease.

The conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. Topics in two areas — the equine business and riding — are highlighted. Participants can attend any session and also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America.

Registration rates are also reasonable. Conference registration is \$75 per person, and \$50 for each additional person from the same farm.

For more information about the conference, contact Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532 or Bob Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Bob Coleman Les Burwash
(403)427-5096 (403)948-8532

MAP to more dollars from your beef

If you're interested in hearing how a U.S. rancher has successfully maintained profits as cattle prices dropped, come to day two of the 1995 Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP'95) conference.

Gregg Simonds, general manager of one of the largest ranch operations in Utah, will explain his strategies for cutting costs while maintaining high production levels. He'll present his "more dollars from your beef" session twice on the afternoon February 1, the second day of the annual three-day MAP conference.

MAP'95 runs January 31 through February 2, 1995 in Red Deer. MAP conference provides leading-edge information to forward-thinking farmers through a blend of theoretical and practical information on subjects related to farm business management, communication, financial planning, marketing, new technologies and trade. Expert speakers, from across North America, provide the information. The 1995 theme is *Smart farming*.

One-day, two-day and complete registration packages are available for both individuals and couples notes Judy Shipley-Smith, chair of the MAP'95 organizing committee. Shipley-Smith is an Alberta Agriculture family business specialist based in Airdrie.

"Two years ago MAP moved to the central location of Red Deer to make the conference more accessible. At the same time, registration was opened up and potential participants were given more options," says Shipley-Smith.

"Depending on their operation, some people can't get away for the entire conference, so one and two-day packages allow them to attend the sessions they can and benefit from expert speakers' knowledge and experiences," she adds.

For example, day two of MAP'95 may be particularly appealing for beef producers. The day opens with plenary speaker Garnet Altwasser discussing beefing up your markets.

Altwasser, co-founder of Lakeside Industries in Brooks, offers his perspective on the marketing strategies Lakeside used to become the largest supplier of carcass beef in North America, how Lakeside deals with producers and the role of research and development.

Other day two topics are planning your way to success, hustle your assets, capital gains savvy, building better teams, crop insurance as a management tool, food safety and a diversification panel.

Day one is led-off with a look at emerging trends in global agriculture. Concurrent session topics includes balancing work and family, is it raining yet, way beyond food, new environmental issues, managing business risk, financial freedom and the electronic highway.

Day three emphasizes market and economic outlooks. Outlooks include crops, specialty crops, livestock, the Canadian economy and international trade.

Conference brochures with complete program and registration information are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation offices. Register before January 11, 1995, and be eligible for a cellular telephone draw.

For more information, call the toll-free MAP hotline at 1-800-387-6030.

Contact: *Judy Shipley-Smith*
(403)948-8505

1-800 to MAP'95 information, registration

If you want to know more about a leading-edge conference for progressive producers, you're a toll-free call away.

The 1995 *Managing Agriculture for Profit* (MAP'95) conference, in Red Deer January 31 through February 2, is the 18th annual farm business management conference presented by Alberta Agriculture in co-operation with other sponsors and organizations. For the past three years, the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation, has been a major project partner.

MAP conferences blend theoretical and practical information on subjects related to farm business management, communication, financial planning, marketing, new technologies and trade. Expert speakers, from across North America, provide the information.

MAP'95 program topics include: emerging global agricultural trends, balancing work and family, new environmental issues, managing business risk, the electronic highway, crop and livestock market outlooks, international trade developments, a Canadian economic outlook, capital gains savvy, financial freedom, team building, food safety, more dollars from your beef and crop insurance as a management tool.

"While conference brochures and registration information are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation offices, you can also call the MAP hotline toll-free for more information or to register," says Judy Shipley-Smith, chair of the MAP'95 organizing committee and Alberta Agriculture family business specialist based in Airdrie. The toll-free number is 1-800-387-6030.

One, two and full three-day registration packages are available. Rates are for both individuals and couples. Register before January 11, 1995, and be eligible for a cellular telephone draw.

Contact: *Judy Shipley-Smith*
(403)948-8505

Agri-News briefs

Wheat Growers celebrate 25th anniversary at '95 convention

The Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association will celebrate its past and envision its tomorrow at its 25th anniversary conference January 4 through 6 at Lake Louise. Session topics include consumer food trends, international trade, dual marketing and grain transportation. The early bird registration deadline is December 15. Complete conference and one-day registration rates are available. To register or for more information, contact the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association in Regina at (306)586-5866.

Talking stock at regional seminar December 16

Cow-calf producers can talk stock at a regional seminar in St. Paul December 16. Topics include: what's new in feeds and feeding; increasing cow herd fertility; and, Trich and other reproductive diseases. Ann Dunford, Canfax analyst, will provide a market outlook. The \$20 registration fee covers lunch. For more information or to register, contact either the St. Paul or Bonnyville Alberta Agriculture district offices. Or, contact Terry Holmgren, beef specialist in St. Paul, at (403)645-6301.

Farmfair'94 neared all-time sales record

Only livestock sales in 1987 were higher than the nearly \$1 million sales total at the 1994 Northlands Farmfair. The 1994 total was \$996,540, just \$9,060 less than the all-time record. Four of the 10 livestock sales also established Edmonton records for average sale prices. They were: Gelbvieh, \$3,217; Murray Grey, \$2,026; Shorthorn, \$2,200; and, Quarter Horse, \$4,167. The highest selling animal was a Charolais cow that went for \$14,500. The official sales are only part of estimated Farmfair sales. Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development officials estimate private follow-up sales will total another \$3 million. Farmfair'94 also attracted a record number of out-of-province cattle traders. The International Agritrade Centre registered 795 visitors, a 58 per cent increase from 1993. It's the sixth consecutive year the number increased. "The annual economic importance of Farmfair is often under-recognized, especially because it coincides with CFR — a national sporting championship," says Bob Gray, manager of Edmonton Northlands' major events department. "But Farmfair is Edmonton's main connection to Alberta's dynamic agri-business industry...and the heritage of our community. Farmfair has long been Alberta's largest agricultural event. New attractions like Country Marketplace and Barn Blast are now attracting increasing numbers of urban families each year. Farmfair'94 was the most entertaining agricultural event ever held in Edmonton," he says. An estimated 50,000 visitors attend Farmfair'94, most from outside Edmonton. For more information, contact Edmonton Northlands at (403)471-7210.

National farm financial survey says situation brighter

The average value of Canadian farmers' net worth has risen 13 per cent since the 1991 Farm Financial Survey. The 1994 survey looked at 12,000 farms with sales greater than \$2,000. The rise is from an increase in farm assets, such as land or livestock, and a little change in liabilities. Farm businesses now have an average of 85 per cent equity. Farmers are investing more in their farming operations, particularly in machinery and buildings. Some have reduced costs and generated higher net cash incomes. While the overall level of farm debt remains constant, the survey indicates the majority of debt is now being held by those who can best afford to carry it. The survey, conducted early in 1994, collected information about revenue, expenses, capital investment and new loans for 1993. Assets and liabilities were also measured on December 31, 1993. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada conducted the survey in co-operation with Statistics Canada. A breakdown for each province is available. For more information, contact Roger Eyvindson in Ottawa at (613)995-5880.

Coming agricultural events

Alberta Pulse Growers' Commission Annual Meeting and Trade Fair

Westin Hotel

Edmonton December 5-7

Commission Office-(403)782-7838-Lacombe

Biobased Products Expo'94

Kansas City Convention Centre

Kansas City, Missouri December 5-7

Barbara Detwiler-(703)734-4081-McLean, Virginia, USA

Direct Seeding Workshop

Dunvegan Inn

Fairview December 6-7

John Zylstra-(403)835-2291-Fairview

Grazing Alfalfa for Profit Seminars

Mayerthorpe Legion Hall December 6

Rycroft Hall December 7

Vermilion Elks Hall December 8

Laurel Aitken-(403)929-2019-Beaumont;

Harvey Yoder-(403)623-5218-Lac La Biche

Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association Annual Meeting

Legion Hall

Olds December 10

Mike Rieberger-(403)224-3743-Bowden;

Norine Whiting-(403)549-2464-Stavely

Talking Stock for Cow-calf Producers

St. Paul December 16

Terry Holmgren-(403)645-6301-St. Paul

1995

Western Canadian Wheat Growers' Association Annual Convention

Chateau Lake Louise
Lake Louise January 4-6
Karen Wronko-(403)985-2449-Calmar

Annual Alberta 4-H Leaders Conference

Marlborough Inn
Calgary January 6-9
Mahlon Weir-(403)422-4444-Edmonton

Artificial Insemination Schools (Beef and Dairy Cattle)

Lethbridge Community College
Lethbridge January 9-13
John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Crop Production Week (Annual Meetings of the Saskatchewan Pulse Crop Development Board, Saskatchewan Seed Growers Association and Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission)

Saskatoon Inn
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan January 9-14
Joan Heath-(306)668-2380-Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Cattlemen's Corral

Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition
Lloydminster January 10-11
Lloydminster Exhibition-(306)825-5571-Lloydminster

Unifarm Annual Convention

The Mayfield Inn and Trade Centre
Edmonton January 10-12
Shirley Dyck-(403)451-5912-Edmonton

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association 1995 Annual Convention

Marlborough Inn
Calgary January 12-14
Ron Axelson-(403)250-2509-Calgary; or, 1-800-363-8598

Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners Conference

The Capri Centre
Red Deer January 14-15
Les Burwash-(403)948-8532-Airdrie;
Bob Coleman-(403)427-5069-Edmonton

Canadian Honey Council & Research Symposium

Mayfield Inn
Edmonton January 14-17
Gertie Adair-(403)489-6949-Edmonton

The Information Superhighway: Using Internet for Communication, Research and Education in Agriculture [course #7735]

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton January 17
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Alberta Canola Producers Commission 1995 Annual Convention

Grande Prairie Inn
Grande Prairie January 17-19
Pansy Molen-(403)452-6487-Edmonton

Canada West Equipment Dealers Association 1995 Convention

Westin Hotel
Winnipeg January 19-21
William Lipsey-(403)250-7581-Calgary

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Annual Meeting

Westin Hotel
Edmonton January 19-21
Bill Witbeck-(403)782-4641-Lacombe

Canadian Bull Congress

Camrose Regional Exhibition
Camrose January 20-21
Gordon Porteous-(403)672-3640-Camrose:
Edmonton direct line 428-1229

Banff Pork Seminar 1995

Banff Springs Hotel
Banff January 24-27
Sharon Katzeff-(403)492-2601-Edmonton

Pacific Northwest Biotechnology Exposition

Westin Bayshore Hotel
Vancouver, B.C. January 25-27
PNBE'95 Secretariat-(604)689-5602-Vancouver, B.C.

CCGD Western Regional Conference

Calgary January 27
Monika Simon-(514)982-0267-Montreal, Quebec;
Bryan Walton (403)250-6608-Calgary

Alberta Farm Womens' Network Conference

Royal West Edmonton Inn
Edmonton January 27-28
Lee Pengilly-(403)934-6032-Strathmore

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference

Convention Inn
Edmonton January 30-February 1
Paul King-(403)672-4765-Camrose

1995 Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP'95) Conference

Capri Centre
Red Deer January 31-February 2
MAP hotline-1-800-387-6030

Alberta Branch Canadian Seed Growers' Association Annual Meeting

Westin Hotel
Edmonton February 1-3
Bill Witbeck-(403)782-4641-Lacombe

1995 Rural Crime Watch Provincial Workshop

Lakeland College
 Vermilion February 3-4
 Carrie Frederick-(403)853-2401-Vermilion

Pork Production and Management Course

Lethbridge Community College
 Lethbridge (starts) February 6
 John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

REDA's Western Economic Conference on the Food Industry

Edmonton Inn
 Edmonton February 6-7
 John Melicher-(403)451-5959-Edmonton

Man and Animals: Ethics, Rights and Responsibilities

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
 Edmonton February 6-7
 Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Artificial Insemination Schools (Beef and Dairy Cattle)

Lethbridge Community College
 Lethbridge February 13-17
 John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Feedlot Diseases Course

Lethbridge Community College
 Lethbridge February 17
 John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Alberta Meat Processors Association Convention

Banff Park Lodge
 Banff February 17-19
 Len Novak-(403)349-4259-Westlock

Waste Management and Utilization

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
 Edmonton February 21-23
 Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

1995 Conservation Workshop Acts 17th Annual Meeting and Farm Progress Trade Show

Westerner Exposition
 Red Deer February 23-25
 Peter Gamache-(403)422-4385-Edmonton; Russ Evans-(403)936-5306-Calgary; Keith Rideout [trade show]-(403)346-3356-Red Deer

Alberta Forage Council Annual Meeting

Westerner Exhibition Park
 Red Deer February 24
 Laurel Aitken-(403)929-2019-Beaumont

Calving Successfully Course

Lethbridge Community College
 Lethbridge February 24
 John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Airphoto Interpretation for Resource Planning, Development and Management

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
 Edmonton March 1-3
 Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Ag Expo '95 and North American Seed Fair

Lethbridge Exhibition
 Lethbridge March 1-4
 Lethbridge Exhibition-(403)328-4491-Lethbridge

47th Seed and Hay Show

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
 Calgary March 4-7
 Michel Higginbotham-(403)261-0162-Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Calgary Bull Sale

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
 Calgary March 5-7
 Michel Higginbotham-(403)261-0162-Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Agriculture Week

Alberta March 5-11
 Bard Haddrell-(403)427-2727-Edmonton

Geographic Information Systems

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
 Edmonton March 7-9
 Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Alberta Institute of Agriologists 48th Annual Meeting

Medicine Hat Lodge
 Medicine Hat March 16-18
 Graham Gilchrist-(403)223-7907-Taber

AgVenture Trade Show and Pro Rodeo

Cypress Centre
 Medicine Hat March 16-18
 Nicole Bachmeier [trade show]-(403)527-5214-Medicine Hat;
 Dan Soderer [rodeo]-(403)527-1234-Medicine Hat

Little Royal Weekend

Lakeland College
 Vermilion March 17-19
 Charman Franz-(403)853-8404-Vermilion; or, 1-800-661-6490

1995 Smoky River Agricultural, Home & Leisure Trade Show

Falher March 17-19
 Jeanne Bisson-(403)837-2211-Falher

Pesticide Applicators' Training Seminar

Lethbridge Community College
 Lethbridge March 20-24
 John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Northlands Farm and Ranch Show & Seed Show

Northlands AgriCom
 Edmonton March 22-25
 Michele Weitzel-(403)471-7260-Edmonton

Alliances for Success: A workshop to develop strategies for growth and development

University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan March 23
Pauline Molder-(306)966-4022-Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Waste Facility Impact Screening for Environmental Health Risk

University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension
Edmonton March 27-28
Michael Splinter-(403)492-3035-Edmonton

Aggie Days & Dairy Classic

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary March 29-April 1
Michel Higginbotham-(403)261-0162-Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

National Soil Conservation Week

April 2-8
Tamara Lewis or Barb Shackel
Hardman-(403)422-4385-Edmonton

Practical Horse Management Course

Lethbridge Community College
Lethbridge (starts) April 4
John Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Consolidated Spring Classic

Victoria Sales Pavilion, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary April 15
Trish Seitz-(403)252-8110-Calgary; or, 1-800-268-5569

Canadian 4-H Council Annual Meeting

The Lodge at Kananaskis
Kananaskis May 31-June 4
Ted Youck-(403)422-4444-Edmonton

4-H On Parade

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary June 2-4
Michel Higginbotham-(403)261-0162-Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

Economic Development and Co-operatives into the 21 Century

Centennial Auditorium
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan June 12-14
University of Saskatchewan
Extension-(306)966-5539-Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Calgary Stampede

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary July 7-16
Michel Higginbotham-(403)261-0162-Calgary; or, 1-800-661-1260

75th Annual Conference Agriculture Institute of Canada – Global Realities and Society's Expectations"

Ottawa, Ontario July 9-13
Gary Loestler-(613)995-9554 or Alan
Bentley-(613)957-7078-Ottawa, Ontario

Agricultural Service Boards Tour

County of Forty Mile No. 8
Foremost July 11-14
Vernon Arnold-(403)867-3530-Foremost

5th Annual Summer Education Agricultural Institute

Lethbridge Community College
Lethbridge July 16-23
Betty Gabert-(403)427-2171-Edmonton; John
Calpas-(403)320-3311-Lethbridge

Editor's Note: Alberta communities host a number of local fairs. Because there are so many, they are not listed here. However, an annual list of agricultural society fairs is compiled by the agricultural education and community services branch. The booklet is available by writing Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Coming agricultural events notice

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions **in 1995**? Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization). **Please include your telephone number:**

Please return this form by February 23, 1994 to:

Agri-News Editor
Communications Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
FAX (403)427-2861

("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in **Agri-News**.

The next list will be **March 6, 1994**)

Nov 30
635
Cap 40

AGRI-NEWS

December 12, 1994

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ALBERTA AGRICULTURE
EDMONTON

Weaker Canadian dollar boon to livestock markets

Both slaughter and feeder cattle markets benefited from a weaker Canadian dollar last month, and a continued weak dollar will be a positive in all livestock markets says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"This doesn't mean sudden prosperity, but prices and margins should be better compared to recent months," says Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch.

In slaughter cattle markets, Gietz forecasts U.S. fed cattle prices to trade in a \$68 to \$73/cwt. price band between now and May. "This would generate Alberta prices — in Canadian dollars — in the upper 80s and low 90s through that same period, based on continued weakness of the Canadian dollar." [See Table 1 below.]

"Such prices would also bring a return to profitability for the feedlot sector, a welcome break from the losses in 1994," he adds.

Month	Alberta Direct Sale Steer (ADS-Steer)	Edmonton D1, 2 Cow
December, 1994	89	51
January, 1995	91	54
February	93	56
March	94	57
April	92	58
May	87	59

Table 1: Forecast average Alberta slaughter cattle prices based on a 73 cent Canadian dollar.

The weakened Canadian dollar and strengthened fed cattle markets were both positive factors in feeder cattle markets says Gietz. As a result, heavy feeder cattle prices crept higher.

"However, the most likely direction of feeder cattle prices is sideways to slightly higher prices before March when heavy volumes may begin to pressure prices. Heavier feeders, 800 to 900 lb., will likely average in the \$95 to \$100/cwt. range," he says.

In the hog market, an unprecedented surge of slaughter hogs onto the U.S. market had a disastrous impact on prices. Canadian hog prices responded in tandem to the slumping U.S. market.

"The Alberta producer payment for Index-100 hogs dropped below the \$1 per kilogram mark by the last week of November," notes Gietz. "But, thanks to a weak Canadian dollar, Canadian producers are relatively better off than their American counterparts."

Cont'd on page 2

This Week

Weaker Canadian dollar boon to livestock markets 1

Special crops, bonded grain companies and sellers beware 2

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

AGRI-NEWS

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development - Publishing Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

Alberta prices were almost this low three years ago when January 1992 prices averaged \$1 per kilogram. Otherwise, the last time monthly prices averaged below the \$1 mark was April 1980.

Gietz does forecast average Alberta slaughter hog prices at 95 cents per kilogram for the month of December. However, he expects the average to rise to \$1.05 in January. He also notes December and January typically record the lowest prices of the year because of sharply reduced packer demand.

"There is some cause for optimism for the second half of 1995 in all of this," he says. "The extreme price drop this fall likely means reduced farrowings and breeding herds, so less supply later next year."

Contact: Ron Gietz
(403)427-5376

Special crops, bonded grain companies and sellers beware

When a revised Canada Grains Act becomes law early in 1995, regulations about who can buy and sell special crops won't have changed.

"Some people in the trade were concerned the revised act would significantly affect special crop commodity dealers," says Matthew Machielse, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. However, Bill C-51 doesn't change licensing requirements.

Currently, not all companies trading in special crops are bonded. This does contravene Canadian Grain Commission rules. "So," says Machielse, "it's still seller beware in this market."

A bonded company is secure to 100 per cent of its bonded level. "However," he adds, "if the trading company buys enough product that it exceeds its bond, then the excess isn't covered and the producer is at risk of payment default."

The Canadian Grain Commission has plans for getting special crop legislation in place during 1995. Expected is a voluntary bonding and a mandatory licensing system and perhaps a producer indemnity fund to provide special crop coverage in the case of default.

The commission will hold two consultation meetings in Alberta later this week. The first is at the Lethbridge Lodge in Lethbridge on December 14. The second is in Edmonton at the Edmonton Inn the next day. Both meetings begin at 9 a.m.

For more information about these meetings, contact the Canadian Grain Commission's Edmonton office at (403)495-5462.

Contact: Matthew Machielse
(403)427-5387

Canola market strength in spite of negatives

The canola market has continued to show tremendous strength even with negative supply factors that have come to light says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Huge oilseed crops in both Canada and the U.S. this year are negative supply factors notes Al Dooley of the market analysis and statistics branch.

"There are other negative factors," says Dooley. "Improved conditions in South American soybean producing areas, unpriced canola on storage tickets and commodity funds that are long in soybean oil futures all suggest the market could be in for some downward pressure."

However, he adds, the negatives "need to be weighed against some equally impressive positive factors." Demand is one of those factors. China, in particular, has been very active in the oilseed market.

"As well, exchange rates are favorable. Canadian canola products are relatively inexpensive in our major buyers' currencies," he notes.

Finally, exceptionally strong palm oil prices and positive market psychology are the other major pluses in the oilseed complex. "And so far, all these positive forces have carried the day," says Dooley.

Dooley says the canola market will remain an interesting one over the balance of the crop year, and as decisions are made about what to seed in the spring of 1995. "If we are to continue to see current usage levels, canola acreage in 1995 can't fall too drastically. Strong wheat prices and crop rotation concerns, will likely pressure canola seeded acreage to some degree," he says.

Contact: Al Dooley
(403)427-5387

Record dehy production projected

The Canadian processed forage industry is projected to produce record levels of high quality dehydrated alfalfa products this crop year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Processed alfalfa production is pegged at 832,000 tonnes for 1994-95. Most of the production is pellets, some 574,000 tonnes. The rest, 258,000 tonnes, is in cubes.

"The greatest production increases are in the Prairie provinces, and Alberta shows the greater year-over-year increase," says Matthew Machielse of the market analysis and statistics branch.

Alberta pellet production is estimated to climb to 255,000 tonnes for 1994-95, compared to 192,000 tonnes last year.

Saskatchewan pellet production is pegged at 281,000, some 20,000 tonnes more than last year. "Alberta and Saskatchewan are by far

the major pellet producers. They account for all but 38,000 tonnes of total Canadian pellet production," notes Machielse.

The current crop year provided much improved conditions on both production and processing sides of the industry. "This should greatly improve quality levels and improve the marketability of the Canadian dehy product," he says.

Canada does export about 85 per cent of domestic processed forage production. A majority goes to Pacific Rim countries. Currently Canada supplies nearly all Japan's dehydrated pellet imports. South Korea and Taiwan have also become significant Canadian markets.

Machielse also notes Canadian producers are proud there is minimal subsidization of their product. For example, the European Union (EU) currently supports their industry in the range of \$120 (Canadian) per tonne. But, the EU's production is restricted to EU consumption. "The EU isn't likely to be a global competitor in the dehy industry in the near future, and that's good news for the Canadian industry," says Machielse.

Contact: *Matthew Machielse*
(403)427-5387

Four top 10 finishes at Agribition judging contest

Four Alberta 4-Hers placed in the top 10 at the *International 4-H Judging Seminar* at Agribition in Regina.

"Our eight member team again showed the strength our 4-H members have in multi-species judging," says Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H agriculture specialist.

John Beasley, of Patricia and the John Ware Beef Club, was fourth overall, fourth in reasons and placed second in horse judging.

Sixth overall was Tracy Gardner of the Olds Eagle Multi Club. Gardner was fifth in overall reasons, fourth in beef classes and fifth in dairy.

Alison Fahlauer of Devon was eighth overall. Along the way, the Calmar Multi Club member placed second in dairy class judging.

Tanya Burgess, of Cardston's Chinook Beef Club, won the swine judging portion of the competition and placed tenth overall.

Two other team members placed in class judging competitions. Aaron Fahlauer was second in swine and third in sheep. Cherie McGowan was fifth in the horse class. Fahlauer is from Devon and a member of the Calmar Multi Club. McGowan is a member of the Killiam Light Horse Club.

Also representing Alberta at the international competition were Billy Mosley of the West Carstairs Beef Club and Dana Vos of the North 40 Mile Club in Burdett.

"Our Alberta delegates win the right to go to other competitions from our provincial contest," notes Wiegman. Senior 4-Hers qualify for the provincial contest through district and regional judging events.

UNIBLOK Canada sponsors the Alberta 4-Hers' trip to the Agribition judging seminar. Accompanying the Alberta delegates were leader Fred Schoening of Pincher Creek and Janet Kerr, regional 4-H specialist.

The Regina competition features 4-H member judges from across Western Canada as well as some teams from the United States.

Contact: *Henry Wiegman*
(403)422-4444

Spotlight on the science of riding

The differences between female and male riders and what to do with them is one of the riding related topics at the *1995 Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* January 13 through 15 in Red Deer.

"Riding is one of two themes at the conference. The other is the equine business," says Alberta Agriculture's Les Burwash, one of the conference organizers.

Mary Vernon, a practising physician, medical school professor and avid dressage rider from Kansas, will discuss female and male equestrians, the special physical attributes each have and how their bodies work in conjunction with a horse's movement.

Another featured speaker on a riding theme is Cherry Hill, an experienced horsewoman, teacher and author based in Colorado. She'll make two presentations. One is on the value of a versatile horse. The other is about developing the mind and body for balance and unity.

"Some people may recognize her name," notes Burwash. "Cherry has a local connection as she was a horsemanship instructor at Olds College in the late 1970s. Many will also recognize her name as an author of several books and more than 600 articles for equine and breed magazines."

Two other riding-related topics are warming-up and cooling down a horse and bits and biting. Award winning extension specialist, Dave Freeman of Oklahoma will share his knowledge about warm up and cool down. Internationally recognized bit manufacturer Greg Darnell will provide his perspective on bits.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America.

The conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. Topics in two areas — the equine business and riding — are highlighted. Participants can attend any session and also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

Registration rates are also reasonable. Conference registration is \$75 per person, and \$50 for each additional person from the same farm. "Our rates are something that have stayed the same over the last few years," notes Burwash.

There's an added bonus for pre-registration. Registrants who pre-pay are eligible to win two nights accommodation with dinner and breakfast for two at either the Timberline Motel in Banff or Red Deer's Capri Centre, plus \$100 spending money.

For more information about the conference, contact Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532 or Bob Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Les Burwash (403)948-8532
Bob Coleman (403)427-5096

Oklahoma State's best at Horse Breeders and Owners Conference

An award winning horse extension specialist is one of the featured speakers at the 1995 *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* January 13 through 15 in Red Deer.

"Dr. David Freeman is simply one of the best," says Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist. "Since becoming the first full-time horse extension specialist at Oklahoma State University 10 years ago, he's developed one of the premier horse extension programs in North America."

Freeman will make two presentations at the conference. One is about warming up and cooling down horses. The second is about setting up a horse business.

"His topics fall into the two themes the conference is emphasizing in 1995 — riding and business," notes Coleman.

The conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. However, participants can attend any session and also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America.

Conference registration is \$75 per person, and \$50 for each additional person from the same farm.

The conference is a joint project of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry section, the Alberta Arabian Horse Breeders Association, the Alberta Quarter Horse Breeders Group and the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (Alberta Division).

For more information about the conference, contact Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096 or Les Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Bob Coleman (403)427-5096
Les Burwash (403)948-8532

Alberta Agriculture appointments

New Vermilion-based district marketing specialist

Neil Blue is the new district marketing specialist based in Vermilion. Blue, who has done contract work as an assistant to and as regional farm economist, has farmed for a dozen years in the Vermilion area. He's also done contract work for the Farm Debt Review Board since 1986. As a district marketing specialist, he'll help farm managers understand and use marketing alternatives. "The goal is to increase producers' net farm income and their feeling of having greater control over marketing their products," says Blue. Blue has a BSc. in agricultural degree from the University of Alberta. He was raised on a family farm, a mixed cattle and grain operation, near Hardisty. Blue can be contacted in Vermilion at (403)853-8101.

Marketing specialist named in Lamont

A veteran with Alberta Agriculture is the new district marketing specialist based in Lamont. Ken Bunnage was regional farm economist, based out of Lethbridge, for a dozen years. Before that, he was a district agriculturist in Strathmore for six years. He describes his new position as assisting farming clients to understand and sort out all the information and data related to marketing agricultural products. "Initiative in marketing is bringing increased rewards. I enjoy being a small part of an industry learning to compete in a global environment," he says. Bunnage holds an agricultural economics bachelors degree from Brigham Young University and a masters degree in farm and financial management from Washington State University. He grew up and took his early education in southern Alberta, and also has a mixed farming background. Bunnage can be reached in Lamont at (403)895-2219.

Crop specialist appointed in Sedgewick

Trevor Schoff has joined Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development as a district crop specialist based in Sedgewick. In his new job, he'll focus on cereal and oilseed production in his work with producers, agribusiness and research groups on crop production activities. Schoff says he looks forward to working as a crop specialist in the Sedgewick area and adds, "My farm background, education and past job experience in central Alberta

give me a good base to build on." Most recently, Schoff was a Red Deer-based soil conservation technician with the department's conservation and development branch. He's also worked as a technician with the Battle River Research Group, a weed inspector for the County of Stettler and as district agriculturist in Strathmore and Airdrie. Schoff graduated from the University of Alberta's BSc. in agriculture program in 1991. He can be contacted in Sedgewick at (403)384-3737.

Agri-News briefs

Unusual features in '94 fall calf run

There were two unusual features of the '94 fall calf run says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Prices dropped sharply immediately after Labor Day and strengthened after mid-October. "This is contrary to typical seasonal patterns," notes Ron Gietz of the market analysis and statistics branch. Another unusual phenomenon was that many markets reported light volumes. "This was strange given an estimated 300,000 head increase in Western Canadian calf supplies compared to 1993," he says. "Apparently a large number of calves were kept on farms longer than normal," he adds. Factors influencing producers to hold calves back, included lower prices, lighter calf weights and ample hay supplies in central and northern districts. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at (403)427-5376.

Cattlemen's Corral booth space deadline December 21

The deadline for booking booth space at the 5th annual *Cattlemen's Corral* is December 21. Cattlemen's Corral '95 is January 10 and 11 at the Lloydminster Exhibition Grounds. The event includes a trade show, livestock displays and information sessions. Agenda topics include the impact of wildlife in the beef industry and marketing strategies. For more information, contact the Lloydminster Exhibition Association at (306)825-5571.

Grande Prairie district office open house December 16

Alberta Agriculture's Grande Prairie district office is holding its second annual open house December 16. Each of the five district specialists will have a display showing their new responsibilities. Department apiculturist Doug Colter will also be on hand. As well, Fairview College will have a computer display. The open house runs from 10 a.m. through 3 p.m. For more information, call the Grande Prairie district office at (403)538-5265.

Charolais breeders award youth scholarships

Two Albertans were awarded \$400 scholarships by the Canadian Charolais Association (CCA). The recipients are Stephen Cholak of Lamont and Leslie Johnson of Grande Prairie. Cholak, 18, is a first year animal science student at the University of Alberta. He's involved in the family purebred operations, and was active in 4-H as well as national Charolais youth conferences and junior shows. Johnson, also 18, is an agricultural technology program student at Fairview College. Although raised in the city, he kept a small purebred Charolais herd at his grandparents' farm and plans to carry on the farming operation. The annual CCA scholarships are presented nationwide. Recipients are youths who are involved in agriculture and are pursuing post-secondary education in a field that would enhance agriculture. The scholarship fund began in 1989 and has grown through breeder and group donations, memorial gifts and special fund raising activities. For more information, contact Joyce Stewart in Calgary at (403)250-9242.

Green Certificate explained in video

A 14-minute video presents the advantages of learning how to farm on the farm through Alberta Agriculture's Green Certificate program. The video describes the three levels of training and shows two apprentice trainees working through the program. The video is available for loan from all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Green Certificate (351 VT) can also be borrowed from the department's central multi-media library in Edmonton by writing 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Alberta Canola Commission annual meeting January 18-19

The Alberta Canola Commission will hold its fifth annual meeting January 18 and 19 in Grande Prairie. The program includes a canola market outlook, production updates, canola varieties, production centre results and other new developments. Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister, is the luncheon speaker on January 19. For more information, contact the commission office in Edmonton at (403)452-6487, or John Schofner, region 2 director in Grande Prairie, at (403)538-4664.

Re-inventing the food industry annual food industry conference theme

Re-inventing the food industry is the theme of the 15th annual *Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry*.

The conference is February 6 and 7 in Edmonton. Early bird registration discounts of \$25 per person are available for registration by January 2. There are also discounts for registering three or more people from one organization by January 20 and February 4. Plenary sessions include the new consumer, viable business structures and redrawing North American food borders. Select-a-session topics include strategic market planning; challenges in selling to the U.S. market; animal welfare trends and implications; and, flexible business networks. For more information, contact the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at (403)451-5959 or fax (403)452-5385.

Entry deadlines for Calgary Seed Fair and Hay Show approach

Producers have a chance at over \$8,000 in prize money and awards at the 47th annual *Calgary Seed Fair and Hay Show*. But, first they have to get their entries in. The entry deadline for hay, silage and haylage is January 20. Cereals and oilseeds entries must be in by February 15. Samples must arrive at the Alberta Agriculture Centre in Airdrie by these dates. There are also two youth (age 18 years and younger) classes. Prize money, awards and tickets to the 1995 Calgary Stampede Grandstand Show are up for grabs. The seed fair and hay show is March 4 through 8, 1995 at Stampede Park in Calgary. For more details or an entry form, contact Brenda at Alberta Agriculture's Strathmore district office at (403)934-3355.

AGRI-NEWS

December 19, 1994

Protect groundwater to ensure long-term supply

Protecting groundwater sources and wells is essential to maintain a long-term supply of good water for your farm says an Alberta Agriculture regional engineering technologist.

"Most groundwater is found in aquifers. Their numbers are limited, so it's important to protect both long-term supply and the quality of your water source," says Bob Buchanan.

Ironically, one of the easiest ways to contaminate a groundwater source is to drill a well. "An improperly constructed well can provide direct access for surface contaminants to flow down into the groundwater source," he explains. "Some chemical and bacterial contaminants are extremely difficult, if not impossible to get rid of. And, the only way to resolve health concerns is either costly water treatment equipment or abandoning the well."

However, most groundwater contamination problems can be prevented by following a few simple guidelines when planning, constructing and maintaining wells.

First, select a well-drained site. Second, locate the well away from sewer systems and livestock facilities where manure can accumulate and seep into the ground.

"You also need to make sure the well driller does the job properly," says Buchanan. Equipment should be disinfected with chlorine both before and during drilling to prevent bacterial contamination. Also, the well driller must install an effective well seal to prevent seepage water from flowing down the gap between the borehole and well casing.

Another precaution, to prevent future supply problems, is to make sure the well driller properly removes fine sediment that can restrict water flow into the well.

Finally, Buchanan recommends ensuring a well cap is in place and in good condition.

"Wells and groundwater can be contaminated and supplies reduced in other ways. To protect yourself and your water supply, think prevention," he advises.

To avoid flooded pump pits, replace with pitless well adaptors. To prevent cross contamination from old unused wells, disinfect and

properly abandon — fill in — old unused wells. Always disinfect all equipment that goes into a well.

After a well is dug, take steps to prevent and control bacteria, mineral and sediment build-up. As well, avoid excessive land clearing and drainage when shallow wells, less than 50 feet deep, are the main water source.

For more information about groundwater and wells, contact one of Alberta Agriculture's regional engineering technologists: Buchanan in Barrhead at (403)672-8252, Orin Kenzie in Lethbridge at

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Alberta
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(403)381-5112 or Ken Williamson in Red Deer at (403)340-5324. Government numbers are toll-free by dialing 310-0000 to connect to a RITE operator.

All Alberta Agriculture district offices also carry the newsletter *Prairie Water News*. The Fall '94 issue is currently available. The newsletter is dedicated to protecting and improving rural water supplies, and its articles cover a range of subjects related to water issues.

Contact: Bob Buchanan
(403)674-8252

Feeder associations program changed

Loan guarantees by the Government of Alberta to the Feeder Associations program have been substantially reduced, however the program will continue to be available to help producers throughout Alberta market surplus feed through feeder cattle.

The maximum loan guarantee for individual feeder associations will be reduced from 25 per cent to 15 per cent. Changes to association loan limits will be done on an individual basis. In addition, the provincial government plans to reduce the cap on total loan guarantees to feeder associations from \$69 million to \$55 million over a three year period.

Regulations were changed on December 6, 1994, so Orders-in-Council won't be required for loan guarantees for each association, as long as provincial loan caps aren't exceeded. The Feeder Associations of Alberta board and individual co-operatives will be consulted on the distribution of guarantees.

Changes to the program came as a result of a study conducted over the past year by the Feeder Associations of Alberta. "I commend the feeder associations for their work in preparing this study and wish to acknowledge their invaluable assistance throughout the review process," says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development minister.

The Feeder Associations Loan Guarantee Act allows farmers to form co-operatives to market surplus feed through feeder cattle. The associations administer their own loans, and members pay all costs. However, the provincial government has historically provided each association with a loan guarantee, so lenders will participate.

Over the program's 56 years, provincial government losses were less than one-twentieth of one per cent of all loans. No losses have been experienced in the last 14 years. In that same period, \$2 billion worth of cattle were fed.

Last year, approximately 10,000 farmers financed 543,000 cattle for a value of \$393 million through 62 local feeder associations. Cattle feeding by local producers also stimulates a great deal of economic activity in rural communities.

Paszkowski points out that without the program, over one-half of feeder association members wouldn't have been able to secure financing. The purchase of calves for feeding requires a large

amount of operating capital. Most small farms have sufficient operating capital for routine farm expenses, but not the extra financing required to purchase feeder cattle.

Contact: Dwight Dibben/Brian Hlus — Executive assistants to the minister — (403)427-5320/(403)427-5096
Doug Milligan/Rick Frederickson — Animal industry division — (403)427-2137

Alberta farmers check diesel before driving in U.S.

Alberta farmers who plan to drive a diesel vehicle into Montana should make sure their diesel fuel isn't red.

"You could end up with a hefty fine because any vehicle found using red diesel on a road in Montana is subject to a fine," notes Dale Dowswell, administrator of Alberta's farm fuel registration program.

"In fact, some Alberta trucks with farm plates and with Alberta red diesel have already been ticketed because of a change in Montana legislation and how that state colors its diesel," he adds.

The U.S. has reduced the allowable sulphur content for diesel fuel used by vehicles on roads. In Montana diesel for off-road uses, such as farming, may have a higher sulphur content. This off-road diesel is colored with a red dye.

In the past, tax exempt diesel sold in Alberta to farmers has been marked, or colored, with a similar red dye. "Some older stocks may still be red, so if you have some on the farm don't use it if you're going into Montana," advises Dowswell.

Purple dye is now used to color marked farm diesel fuel in Alberta. High sulphur diesel is dyed green in Alberta. "Depending on whether the bulk fuel started as high sulphur — green — or as low sulphur — clear, Alberta farm fuel now ranges from purple to brown," adds Dowswell.

Dowswell also notes the Montana legislation doesn't apply to colored gasoline.

Contact: John Larson
(403)422-0015

Dale Dowswell
(403)422-9167

November is for normal in '94 weather picture

When it comes to weather, normal is an average and the average is seldom the normal weather pattern. However, November 1994 was normal for November.

"November temperatures were near normal and precipitation was a bit below normal," notes Peter Dzikowski, Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"The average monthly temperature for November was -4.9°C , identical to the 1961 to 1990 normal temperature," he adds.

Average precipitation in Alberta was 15.6 mm, 4.4 mm below the 1961 to 1990 average for the month. These averages are based on data recorded at 44 Environment Canada climate stations across the province.

"But even within that average, there were different kinds of temperatures," he says. November began with cold temperatures but warm chinook winds brought the sunny weather back to most regions. Over the next three weeks, strong westerly chinook winds battled cold Arctic air. As a result, several wind warnings were issued.

"When the chinook winds dominated the weather, temperatures increased. When the cold Arctic air dominated, temperatures decreased and winter conditions returned," says Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch. "This battle continued right up to the end of the month when the Arctic system won, a blanket of snow was on the ground and the colder Arctic air was over most of Alberta."

Average November temperatures ranged from three degrees above normal to 1.8 degrees below normal. The warmest monthly average in Alberta was Bow Island's -1.2°C , which was still 0.2 degrees below its normal. High Level reported the coldest monthly average temperature, -12.5°C which was 0.1 degrees above normal. Elk Island reported -4.6°C , three degrees warmer than its long-term November average.

Most Alberta locations received precipitation amounts near to below normal. However, Grande Prairie's 60.6 mm was more than double its normal for November. On the opposite end of the scale, Coronation received 0.6 mm, the least precipitation of all the stations, about 4 per cent of its long-term average.

Most of southern Alberta reported between near zero and 20 mm of precipitation, varying from 40 to 100 per cent of normal. The lowest precipitation amounts were in eastern Alberta.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
(403)422-4385

Acid test to antipasto safety

Commercial antipasto formulations and processes can't always be duplicated at home, so choose your recipe, process and storage method carefully says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"We recommend a recipe known as *Jardiniere* developed by Agriculture Canada several years ago, because traditional antipasto can't be canned safely at home," says Linda St. Onge.

This recipe includes a high-acid relish mixed with the antipasto ingredients. "Usually the mixture of antipasto ingredients includes oil, fish and vegetables such as mushrooms, olives or peppers. These are all low-acid foods. Even with ketchup and pickles added,

the antipasto's pH might not be low enough to ensure safe storage with only a boiling water bath," explains St. Onge.

"The *Jardiniere* relish recipe is a safe and delicious alternative for home canners," she adds. This type can be stored in the refrigerator and used within a week.

The canning company Bernardin has distributed the recipe. It's also available from Alberta Agriculture regional foods and nutrition specialists in Edmonton at (403)427-2412 and Airdrie at (403)948-8504. Government numbers are toll-free by dialing 310-0000 to connect to a RITE operator.

There are two other safe ways to store classic antipasto. One is to freeze it in jars or plastic containers. "Note you may get texture and flavor changes with this methods," says St. Onge.

Finally, pressure process antipasto in jars. Pressure processing kills any botulism organisms that can grow in low-acid foods. Processing time should be based on the ingredient that needs the longest time. In many recipes, that's tuna, and the processing time is 100 minutes.

"This isn't a preferred recommendation, though, because there are certain texture and flavor changes. For example, one client found the finished jar had an unacceptable scorched flavor when pressure processed for that length of time," notes St. Onge.

"Some people tell us that they've made antipasto for years, never processed it and never had a problem," she adds. "That's possible. Their recipe may have a low pH and they used good food handling practices. But our concern is safety, so we don't recommend boiling water bath processing or an open kettle fill."

St. Onge notes a pH of 4.0 is critical as bacteria won't grow at this acid level. "Our department's Food Processing and Development Centre has done some work in this area. If you want to make antipasto as a business and check the pH of your antipasto, you should contact the agrifood development consultant in your area."

Alberta Agriculture agrifood development consultants are based in Lethbridge (403)381-5130, Red Deer (403)340-5358 and Grande Prairie (403)538-5285. Government numbers are toll-free by dialing 310-0000 to connect to a RITE operator.

"If you have a home-based antipasto making business, you'd be wise to invest in a pocket pH metre," St. Onge advises. They cost about \$80 and are available from scientific supply houses.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
(403)427-2412

Getting down to the brass tacks of the horse business

While the annual *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* offers a diversity of sessions to the horse enthusiast, its program also concentrates on the equine business.

"There's always a strong business theme in the conference," says Les Burwash, a conference organizer and head of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry section. The conference is January 13 through 15 in Red Deer.

"Speakers will discuss subjects ranging from the production side of the business through to the management side of the horse business," he adds.

Production related topics include maximizing foaling rates, developing a herd health program, using transported semen, forage in horse rations, causes and prevention of respiratory problems and Potomac horse fever.

On the business management side, topics include: setting up a horse business, factors that affect profits on a Thoroughbred farm, the value of a versatile horse and insurance requirements.

"Some topics, such as the business of pinhooking, overlap between production and management," adds Burwash.

Riding is the other major theme of the 1995 conference. A number of speakers will present sessions related to the science, art and business of riding.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America. The conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. Participants can attend any session and also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

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For more information about the conference, contact Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532 or Bob Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Les Burwash (403)948-8532
Bob Coleman (403)427-5096

"We usually have a Kentucky connection at the conference," notes Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist.

"Kentucky is one of the key areas of the North American horse industry, so Kentucky-based speakers are a natural for one of the North America's leading conferences for horse breeders and owners," he adds.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America. "It's also the only one of its kind in Canada," notes Coleman.

The Kentucky speakers are both from Lexington. Steven Johnson has been managing Margaux Stud for a number of years. Former jockey Craig Bendorhoff is recognized for his ability to select and prepare young horses for market.

Johnson will present two topics. "One of his claims to fame is his management ability and knowledge of managing the farm business, so he'll talk about factors that affect profitability on a Thoroughbred farm," says Coleman.

His other topic is using forage in horse rations. "It's something he's very familiar with and has also been nationally recognized for," notes Coleman. The American Forage and Grassland Association recently honored Johnson for his effective use of forage on a horse breeding farm.

Bendorhoff will discuss the business of pinhooking. Pinhooking is preparing and marketing weanlings to sell as yearlings or two-year-olds.

"Craig is considered one of the best at preparing young horses for sale, in both the young horses he selects and selling them at their best market potential," says Coleman.

The conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. Topics in two areas — the equine business and riding — are highlighted. Participants can attend any session and also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

Registration rates are reasonable. Conference registration is \$75 per person, and \$50 for each additional person from the same farm. "Our rates are something that have stayed the same over the last few years," says Coleman.

There's an added bonus for pre-registration. Registrants who pre-pay are eligible to win two nights accommodation with dinner and breakfast for two at either the Timberline Motel in Banff or Red Deer Capri Centre, plus \$100 spending money.

For more information about the conference, contact Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096 or Les Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Bob Coleman (403)427-5096
Les Burwash (403)948-8532

Kentucky connection at Alberta horse conference

Two Kentucky horsemen will share their expertise at the annual *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* January 13 through 15 in Red Deer.

Quest for quality at Banff Pork Seminar

One of Western Canada's premiere symposiums for the pork industry returns to Banff January 24 through 27.

"The theme of this year's *Banff Pork Seminar* program is the quest for quality," notes Fred Schuld of Alberta Agriculture's pork, poultry and horse unit.

"That quality follows from healthy swine herds and good nutrition all the way through to pork products," he adds. "The seminar program is set up along these lines."

The first morning, January 25, focuses on quality assurance in pork production, while the afternoon switches to product quality assurance. Day two starts with a look at weaned and growing pig nutrition. In the afternoon there are parallel workshops on improved pork production management. The final day features production strategies and herd health management.

"The *Banff Pork Seminar* attracts international calibre speakers," says Schuld. On the 1995 line-up are: Hans Schouwenburg, of the Netherlands, who heads a national research programme and leads the IQC-Scheme for Pigs; John Patience, president and CEO of the Prairie Swine Centre; and, other well respected Canadian and U.S. industry leaders.

The seminar is designed for people interested in improving their pork production knowledge and decision-making abilities. "The program will interest commercial pork producers, researchers, agribusiness people, extension workers and anyone else interested in the most up-to-date information about pork production and technology," says Schuld.

Registration before December 31 is \$165 per person, after December 31 registration goes up to \$215. There are discounts for five people from the same organization. Registration includes complete proceedings.

Conference brochures are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices. For registration information, contact Sharon Katzeff at the University of Alberta in Edmonton at (403)492-2601.

Contact: Fred Schuld
(403)427-5320

MAP to commodity outlooks

Crops, livestock, the Canadian economy and international trade outlooks are mapped out at the final day of the 1995 Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conference.

MAP'95 runs January 31 through February 2 at Red Deer's Capri Centre. The conference offers top-notch information to farm managers.

"Outlook sessions have been popular features throughout the history of MAP conferences, and outlooks certainly fit into our 1995 theme of *\$mart farming*," notes Judy Shipley-Smith, chair of the

MAP organizing committee and Alberta Agriculture regional family business specialist based in Airdrie.

"All the outlooks are together on the same day, the final day of the conference," she adds.

Four of the sessions will be presented twice, first at 8:30 a.m. and again at 10 a.m. Those sessions are the specialty crop, crop, livestock and Canadian economic outlooks. "All will focus on short-term outlooks," notes Shipley-Smith.

Blair Roth, of Alberta Pool in Lethbridge, will discuss specialty crops. He'll describe special markets — such as those for peas, lentils, mustard seed and canary seed — and explain factors that affect price.

The crop outlook comes from Larry Ruud, a partner in Market Maximizer Inc. and former Alberta Agriculture grains and oilseeds market analyst. Ruud's session will focus on the short-term outlook for export and domestic grains and oilseeds.

A Denver commodity broker will look at short-term Alberta and North American livestock markets. Larry Hicks will concentrate on cattle prices, but will also talk about hog and poultry trends.

Hicks, a broker for more than 20 years, has a warning for producers. "If you thought 1994 was tough, you better get a seat belt for your saddle. The market volatility has just begun," he says.

The Bank of Montreal's chief economist will provide the Canadian economic outlook. Tim O'Neill will look at financial indicators such as interest rates, unemployment, the value of the Canadian dollar and Gross National Product (GNP).

"We've also scheduled a look at international trade developments," says Shipley-Smith. This session will run once at 10 a.m.

Two Alberta Agriculture trade directors will share their knowledge about the changed world economy, the realities of an exporting province in the world of GATT and NAFTA, and some of the challenges and opportunities trade developments are creating for Alberta agri-food products and services.

One-day, two-day and complete registration packages are available for both individuals and couples. Registrations before January 11 are eligible for MAP's early bird prize, a cellular telephone.

Conference brochures with complete program and registration information are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices and Agriculture Financial Services Corporation offices. Or, for more information call the toll-free MAP hotline at 1-800-387-6030.

Expert speakers from across North America provide a blend of theoretical and practical information at MAP on subjects related to farm business management, communication, financial planning, marketing, new technologies and trade.

Contact: Judy Shipley-Smith
(403)948-8505

Agri-News briefs

Fall'94 Prairie Water News available

The Fall 1994 issue of the Prairie Water News is now available at all Alberta Agriculture district and regional offices. The newsletter is published semi-annually and highlights protecting and improving rural water supplies. Surface water quality, odor control in water heaters, protecting groundwater, improving drinking water and stabilization techniques for riparian areas are topics in this issue. The newsletter is co-sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, the Saskatchewan Research Council, Sask Water and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA). For more information contact Bob Buchanan in Barrhead at (403)674-8252.

Risk management for extension staff, FBMI trainers and project leaders

A *risk management in agriculture* workshop will run January 23 through 25 in Edmonton. The course is funded by the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative (FBMI) and is open to Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development staff, FBMI trainers and project leaders, and farmers. Len Bauer, of the University of Alberta, is the instructor. It's a hands-on workshop designed to give participants risk management knowledge through a combination of instruction, group discussion and activities. Workshop participants will be guided through a process to identify, measure and devise risk management strategies for a number of agricultural commodities and activities. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. There isn't a workshop fee. For more information contact Bauer in Edmonton at (403)492-4178 or Paul Gervais in Olds at (403)556-4240.

Internet and agriculture combined at U of A course

January 17 is the date of an information super highway course designed specifically for agricultural professionals. The one-day University of Alberta faculty of extension course covers using Internet for communication, research and education in agriculture. Hands-on practice is a course feature. Participants will learn what Internet is, how to access and navigate the net, about e-mail and news services, how to access remote databases and how Internet can be used to find information quickly. To register or for more information contact Sheila Greenberg at (403)492-3029.

Grocery Distributors Western regional conference January 27

The Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGA) is holding its 1995 Western regional conference January 27 in Calgary. *Total quality – the ultimate advantage* is the conference theme. Presentation topics are consumers redefining total quality, the ultimate advantage through quality execution at the store level, the quality advantage ISO 9000/HACCP, exploring quality through biotechnology and quality in a competitive world. Speakers include competitiveness expert John Crispo, retail analyst Denyse Chicoyne, quality management consultant Gary Malenfant and marketing and communications strategist Greg White. Registration is \$180 on or before January 20 and \$210 after January 20. For more information contact Bryan Walton, CCGA western regional vice-president, in Calgary at (403)250-6608 or fax (403)250-7022.

Crop Production Week in Saskatoon

Saskatoon is the site of Saskatchewan's *Crop Production Week* January 9 through 14. Events include annual meetings of and research updates from the Saskatchewan Pulse Crop Development Board, the Saskatchewan Seed Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Canola Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission, Flax Growers of Western Canada and the Saskatchewan Forage Council. The Western Canadian Crop Production show runs during the same time. Special programs on January 11 are a discussion of the Canadian Wheat Board's future and "free trade or fair trade" on Canada U.S. trade. For more information contact Joan Heath at (306)668-2380.

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December 26, 1994

Note: This is the last issue of 1994. Due to office closures, the next Agri-News issue will be dated January 9, 1995.

Provincial ministry, industry meet challenges

Alberta's agriculture department and the provincial industry haven't shied away from reform in 1994 says Walter Paszkowski, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's minister.

"Our industry has been there when I went out asking for their opinions on a department business plan and reform to marketing, transportation and safety net policy. Department staff have taken the lead in adjusting to the realities and demands of better serving the industry," says the minister.

Three different series of consultation meetings were held for producer and agrifood business input. The topics were the department business plan and a comprehensive approach to agricultural policy.

"As well, the Agriculture and Food Council continued its mandate of keeping *Creating Tomorrow's* strategies and goals in the forefront. Certainly, Alberta's industry leaders and individuals continue to recognize the importance of moving forward and not looking back," says Paszkowski.

"The same can be said of my ministry," he adds. "Our three-year business plan points a specific route to fulfilling Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's mission of supporting sustainable growth and development of a market-driven agriculture and food industry."

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's field offices are one notable change in ministry operations. "Specialization in our district offices is something our clients asked for," notes the minister. "Anyone anywhere in the province can come into a district office and be connected to the information source they need. It's an exciting and challenging time for staff in the field, and they've shown tremendous drive in making the restructured, specialized services work for our department's clients."

Streamlining offices has also extended to amalgamating the former Alberta Agriculture Development Corporation (ADC) and Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation into Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). As well, in pilot locations

AFSC offices have been combined with Farm Credit Corporation offices to offer extended one-stop farm credit services shopping.

In October *The Report Card on the Rural Development Initiative* highlighted a related service to help rural Albertans. The Services and Programs Electronic Retrieval System for Government (SPERG) lists all provincial programs and services. The electronic SPERG system is available in all government offices.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Publishing Branch
(formerly Print Media)

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor - Cathy Wolters

"Rural development is a priority. New rural development positions, as well as agri-food development consultants, are part of the new-look and mandate of our field services staff," says Paszkowski.

"On the provincial level, we've made a number of regulatory changes to streamline operations for our clients as well as to be more fiscally responsible. One example is the change to lifetime brands that will eliminate a lot of paperwork and time for both producers and staff. We've also moved to better co-ordinate federal and provincial meat grading and inspection, and potato grading.

"While not as far reaching as the national reform our industry needs, those activities indicate Alberta isn't standing still. We're taking action. We're also coming up with solutions and innovations, not just outlining problems. It's an attitude that will keep our industry competitive and strong.

"Our production ability isn't in question. But our future is more than an ability to produce, it's the ability to grow what the global market will buy, to be on the leading edge of research and to remove obstacles in the way of opportunity," he concludes.

Contact: Dwight Dibben or Brian Hlus
Executive assistants to the minister
(403)427-2137

Risk link to agriculture, law and environment

Environmental law has joined weather, pests and markets as a challenge faced by farmers.

"Tough new environmental laws are having, and will have, far-reaching effects on farm business," says Paul Gervais, an Alberta Agriculture farm business management specialist.

"If you want to know more about how to avoid the unnecessary risk of environmental liability on your farm, a one-day seminar can help," he adds.

In the *Environmental Law in Agriculture — Managing the Risk* seminar, agricultural lawyer Julian Bodnar reviews environmental law as it affects agriculture as well as giving participants basic tools to better manage environmental legal liability risks on their farms.

"This seminar outline the rights and responsibilities farmers have with these new rules, and describe the risks both individuals and their businesses face," says Gervais.

"Whether you're involved in grain, forage, special crops, dairy or other livestock production, this seminar is an opportunity to prepare yourself to meet the challenge of environmental law," he adds.

Seminar topics include: legal principals; purchase, lease and sale of real property; dealing with bankers and other lenders; surface leases and easements; and, preventing liability and prosecution.

Three successful seminars were held in November note Gervais.

"More are planned for early 1995," he adds.

Seminars have been scheduled for Airdrie on January 30, Rocky Mountain House on January 31, Falher on February 14 and Camrose on February 16.

Seminars are also planned for Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, however dates and locations haven't been confirmed.

The one-day seminars start at 9:30 a.m. and run through 3:30 p.m. Lunch isn't provided. The registration fee is \$21.40 (includes GST).

"Seating is limited, so please pre-register," says Gervais. "You have a couple of registration options." To register, call 1-800-FARM LAW (1-800-327-6529) toll-free, or contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Partial funding for the environmental law in agriculture seminar was provided by the Canada/Alberta Farm Business Management Initiative (FBMI).

For more information about the seminar, contact Gervais at the farm business management branch in Olds at (403)556-4240 or fax (403)556-7545, or Bodnar at 1-800-327-6529.

Contact: Paul Gervais	Julian Bodnar
(403)556-4250	1-800-FARM-LAW
	1-800-327-6529

Paying family members wages has tax advantages

Farm families can reduce their tax bill and boost their after-tax family income by as much as 10 per cent by paying family members wages or salaries says an Alberta Agriculture business management specialist.

"While there are a number of advantages to paying farm family members for their work, there are also some disadvantages to consider," says Paul Gervais of the farm business management branch in Olds.

Paying children wages for their farm work is a tax deductible expense to the farm business explains Gervais. "This can reduce the family's total income tax bill by splitting income among family members. Any small business may deduct employee wages as a cost of doing business, and farming is a small business. Wages or salaries must be reasonable for the work done.

"A spouse who works on the farm and hires someone to look after young children can deduct child care expenses," he adds. "The children have to be younger than 14 and the care-giver, if related, must be over 18."

Regular wage payments can also replace year-end tax reduction strategies such as purchasing machinery to claim a depreciation expense.

Paying wages and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) premiums to people over 18 years, means those individuals can be eligible for CPP's retirement and disability benefits.

"Paying CPP premiums is also connected to one of the disadvantages — an increase in paperwork and record keeping," notes Gervais. To start, an employer registration number is needed from Revenue Canada. Extra paper work includes completing a *Personal Tax Credit Return* for each employee, keeping a detailed monthly payroll ledger and submitting monthly remittance forms to Revenue Canada Taxation.

Farm employers may also have extra payroll expenses besides CPP such as Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC) premiums.

"One of the issues you should consider is how each person's stake in the farm business is affected by paying wages," says Gervais. "Often interest in the farming operation increases because of monetary recognition."

An Alberta Agriculture factsheet *Paying Wages to Family Members* (Agdex 823-3) explains details about the benefits and drawbacks, how wages and tax credits work, paperwork required, payroll deductions; and, answers some common questions. The factsheet is available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices.

For more information contact Gervais in Olds at (403)556-4250.

Contact: Paul Gervais
(403)556-4250

Rural Crime Watch week January 30 - February 4

Rural Crime Watch Week returns to Alberta January 30 through February 4 in 1995.

"This awareness week was designated to give the Rural Crime Watch program exposure in rural communities," says Alberta Agriculture's Cliff Munroe.

"It's also an opportunity for local associations to do membership drives and make communities more aware that Rural Crime Watch exists in their area," he adds.

The only provincial event tied to the awareness week is the annual provincial Rural Crime Watch workshop. The workshop runs February 3 and 4 in Vermilion. [See separate story this issue.]

"Local organizations are encouraged to contact local media and hold events to profile their association," notes Munroe. "Last year local newspapers, in particular, carried a number of articles about their area's associations and what they do."

Currently there are 46 community Rural Crime Watch associations with a total membership of approximately 60,000. [A list of Alberta Rural Crime Watch associations with local contacts is attached for your information.]

The Rural Crime Watch program started as a pilot project in 1979. The founding organizations included Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Western Stock Growers' Association and the RCMP. The program's goal is decreasing rural crime affecting farmers, ranchers, acreage owners and others who have a vested interest in rural communities.

"Members act as eyes and ears for the police. Many organizations also have computer fan-out telephone systems connecting members and the local RCMP detachment," notes Munroe.

Contact: Cliff Munroe
(403)427-4241

Provincial Rural Crime Watch workshop February 3-4

Vermilion, Mannville, Minburn, Innisfree and Derwent Rural Crime Watch associations are hosting the 14th annual provincial workshop February 3 and 4 in Vermilion.

"Past participants will notice some program format changes," says Alberta Agriculture's Cliff Munroe.

All resolutions must be submitted before the workshop. "We won't be taking any resolutions from the floor on February 4. This should streamline some of our discussions and also allow delegates a better opportunity to look at resolutions," explains Munroe.

As well, the workshop style will return to the annual event. "While there will be keynote speakers in the morning, in the afternoon delegates can choose to attend one of six concurrent workshops.

Workshop topics include farm insurance, livestock theft, increasing association memberships, spotting drugs in your community, the Report-A-Poacher program and livestock disease.

Workshop and convention activities on Saturday are at the Vermilion campus of Lakeland College. Friday evening registration is at the Alberta Fire Training School.

The \$30 registration fee includes three meals and Saturday evening entertainment.

"We know February is a cold and dreary time of year, but we are aiming for a productive turnout because *crime prevention is everyone's business*," says workshop co-ordinator Carrie Frederick.

For more information contact Frederick at (403)853-2401 or Constable Karl Vidal at (403)853-4441 in Vermilion, or Constable Wayne Young in Mannville at (403)763-3798.

Contact: Cliff Munroe
(403)427-4241

Carrie Frederick
(403)853-2401

Rural Crime Watch Associations

Area	Local Association	Contact		RCMP Detachment
Airdrie	Rockview RCW Association	Dave Kirby	226-0975	Airdrie
Athabasca	Baseline RCW Association	Duane Workman	675-9128 (R) 675-4088 (B)	Athabasca
Barrhead	Barrhead & District Crimewatch	Don Plantinga	674-3946	Barrhead
Beaverlodge	Beaverlodge RCW	Alice McKay	354-8549	Beaverlodge
Boyle	Boyle & Newbrook District RCW	Hazel Lund	689-3328	Boyle
Camrose	Round Hill Battleford Trail Range Patrol	Don Olson	672-6043	Camrose
Camrose	West Camrose – Bittern Lake RCW	G. Pat Smith	672-6370	Camrose
Cochrane	Cochrane Foothills Protective Association	Bill Bateman	932-5428	Cochrane
Coronation	Paintearth Protective Society	Tony Nichols	882-2343	Coronation
Fairview	Fairview RCW	Dave McLaren	835-2061	Fairview
Forestburg	Hastings Coulee RCW Society	Ken Walker	582-3688	Forestburg
Fort Saskatchewan	Fort Saskatchewan & District RCW Association	Richard Fyfe	998-3097	Fort Saskatchewan
Grande Prairie	Grande Prairie RCW Association	Joe Mickelberry	568-4110	Grande Prairie
Grimshaw	Grimshaw Area RCW	Frank Debogorski	597-3891	Grimshaw
Hanna	Rangeland RCW Association	Leslie Czar	854-2433	Hanna
Innisfail	Cottonwood RCW Association	Dave Jochem	227-2033	Innisfail
Innisfail	Crossroads Ag. Society RCW	Edward Kaip	227-2056	Innisfail
Innisfail	Raven Rural Crime Watch	Danny Roach	728-3177 (R) 341-7649 (B)	Innisfail
Killam	Flagstaff RCW Association	Stan Chevraux	385-2168	Killam
Leduc	Leduc Rural Crime Watch	Edna Wesenberg	986-2398	Leduc
Lethbridge	Readymade RCW	George Virginillo	345-4212	Lethbridge
Mannville	Mannville – Innisfree – Minburn Rural Crime Watch	Willie Sargeant	763-2283	Mannville
Morinville	Sturgeon RCW	Henry Bergstreiser	967-5612	Morinville
Okotoks	Okotoks Range Patrol			Okotoks
Picture Butte	Picture Butte RCW Association	Tony Hormoth	738-4449	Picture Butte
Redwater	Redwater & District Crime Watch	Ron Mykyte	398-2462	Redwater
Rimbey	Rimberly & District Crime Watch	David Buckler	843-3664	Rimbey
Rocky Mountain House	Rocky Mountain House RCW	Allan Titford	845-6541	Rocky Mountain House
St. Paul	Greater Lakeland RCW	David Boorse	726-2342	St. Paul
Smoky Lake	Smoky Lake County RCW	Trevor Tychkowsky	656-4035 (R) 656-3963 (B)	Smoky Lake

Rural Crime Watch Associations (continued)

Area	Local Association	Contact		RCMP Detachment
Spirit River	Bonanza & Area RCW Association	Mrs. Christine Meier	353-2220	Spirit River
Stettler	Heart of Alberta Crime Watch	Keith Haustein	747-2129	Stettler
Stony Plain	East Parkland Crime Watch	Lynn Roberts	470-0627	Stony Plain
Stony Plain	Muir Lake & Area Crime Watch	Frank Kelly	963-0404	Stony Plain
Strathmore	Wheatland Range Patrol	Warren Clayton	272-9841	Strathmore
Swan Hills	Fort Assiniboine Range Patrol	Wanyne Renfert	584-2128	Swan Hills
Thorsby	Thorsby RCW			Thorsby
Tofield	Beaverhill RCW	Dave Maruszczyka	688-2465 (R) 945-8144 (B)	Tofield
Vermilion	Vermilion & Area RCW Association	Donald Frederick	853-2401	Vermilion
Viking	Viking & District RCW Association	Ken Field	336-2384	Viking
Wainwright	Wainwright & Area Crime Watch	Mr. Clark Steele	842-2159	Wainwright
Westlock	Westlock & District RCW	Roselie Horst	348-5769	Westlock
Wetaskiwin	Falun Rural Crime Watch	Vance Henke	352-2797	Wetaskiwin
Wetaskiwin	Gwynne Range Patrol Association	Tony Prinse	352-0513 (R) 352-0570 (B)	Wetaskiwin
Wetaskiwin	Rosebriar Range Patrol	Donal Graff	877-2487	Wetaskiwin

Information, entertainment with local flavor

You might see yourself or someone you know in the presentation of horseman and humorist Ron Anderson at the 1995 *Horse Owners and Breeders Conference*.

Anderson will entertain conference delegates on the evening of January 14. The conference runs January 13 through 15 in Red Deer.

"Ron offers an interesting and entertaining perspective on the horse industry, and he's also one of the locals on the program," says Bob Coleman, a conference organizer and Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist.

Two Alberta equine veterinarians will also share their expertise. Chris Belan of Balzac will tell conference goers how to develop a horse health program on their farms.

Darrell Dalton, who has a general equine practice in Red Deer, was the first person to diagnose Potomac Horse Fever in Alberta. "Dr. Dalton will discuss the disease, its symptoms and how to work with your own vet if you suspect the disease," notes Coleman.

Panelists for a discussion of insurance requirements for horse operations also hail from Alberta. Dean Bailey of Edmonton and

Mark Weir of Calgary both represent the Western Union Insurance Company. Bailey is experienced in farm underwriting and Weir is an insurance claims expert. John Owen, of Calgary, has specialized in livestock mortality insurance for 30 years and through an established group of local agents provides insurance service for purebred livestock breeders across Canada.

Alberta Agriculture's Les Burwash is also a program speaker. Burwash, a reproductive physiologist who manages the department's horse industry equine programs, will discuss using transported semen.

The *Horse Breeders and Owners Conference* is the only one of its kind in Canada and one of the foremost of its type for horse enthusiasts and the equine industry in North America.

The conference has four programs — Arabian, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and All Breeds. The 1995 conference has two major themes, riding and the horse business. Participants can attend any session and also receive printed materials from all the sessions.

Cont'd on page 6

The conference is a joint project of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry section, the Alberta Arabian Horse Breeders Association, the Alberta Quarter Horse Breeders Group and the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (Alberta Division).

Conference registration is \$75 per person, and \$50 for each additional person from the same farm.

For more information about the conference, contact Burwash in Airdrie at (403)948-8532 or Bob Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-5096. Those numbers are toll-free through the nearest RITE operator at 310-0000.

Contact: Les Burwash
(403)948-8532

Bob Coleman
(403)427-5096

Working smart in the hog breeding barn workshop

If you'd like to work smarter in your hog breeding barn, come to a stockhandlers' workshop January 24 workshop in Olds.

Design and layout of the LEVIS-system for swine breeding facilities will be explained by Don Levis at the afternoon workshop.

A University of Nebraska extension swine specialist and animal science professor, Levis is recognized as a leading authority in the U.S. and is internationally renowned for swine breeding facility design and management, managing sows and boars for reproductive efficiency and swine artificial insemination. He's worked with pork producers in North America, Europe, Australia and Malaysia with swine operations varying from 50 to 120,000 sows.

"His system is geared to optimize reproductive performance of both natural and artificial matings," notes Art Lange, Alberta Agriculture's supervisor of swine improvement.

"Workshop participants can learn how he applies his breeding barn principles and reproductive management strategies to increase reproductive performance of boars, sows and gilts," adds Lange.

Space for the workshop is limited. "Pre-registration by January 20 is a must," stresses Lange. Registration forms were mailed to producers by the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation (APPDC). Additional forms are available from Alberta Agriculture regional pork specialists and Alberta Agriculture district offices. The registration fee is \$20. The workshop will be held at Olds College Duncan Marshall Place lecture theatre. The course starts at 1 p.m. and runs through 3:30 p.m.

The workshop is jointly sponsored by the Alberta Swine Genetics Corporation, the Pig Industry Discussion Group, the APPDC, Alberta Agriculture and Olds College.

For more information contact Lange in Edmonton at (403)427-5083. Government numbers are toll-free by dialing 310-0000 to connect to a RITE operator.

Contact: Art Lange
(403)427-5083

MAP onto the electronic information highway

If you're looking for an electronic highway learner's license, the 1995 Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conference is for you.

The farm business management conference runs January 31 through February 2 in Red Deer. Its first day highlights the electronic information highway in two sessions plus an evening information fair.

Drivers on the electronic highway features several farmers who are using some component of the electronic highway.

"Each of the panelists will tell you the who, what, when, where and why of the electronic system they're using," says Dale Kuly, a member of the MAP'95 program committee.

"They'll go even further to explain the pros and cons they've experienced and whether driving the electronic highway is worth it," he adds.

Jerome Martin, of the University of Alberta's extension faculty, will give advice on how not to get run over on the electronic highway. Martin has written a paper about how Internet and electronic bulletin boards can be accessible for rural Canadians.

"Both the panel and Dr. Martin's sessions will be repeated, so participants have the opportunity to get to both," notes Kuly, a Stettler-based loans officer with the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC).

Electronic information systems will also be part of January 31's evening activities. Representatives of information technology companies will be on hand to show their systems and offer conference participants hands-on demonstrations.

"This isn't about buying computer equipment," emphasizes Kuly. "Participating companies offer some sort of electronic link-up. As well, there'll be a demonstration of the national FBMinet bulletin board."

MAP'95 is the 18th annual farm business management conference presented by Alberta Agriculture in co-operation with other sponsors and organizations. For the past three years, AFSC has been a major project partner.

MAP conferences blend theoretical and practical information on subjects related to farm business management, communication, financial planning, marketing, new technologies and trade. Expert speakers from across North America provide the information.

MAP'95 program topics include emerging global agricultural trends, balancing work and family, new environmental issues, managing business risk, crop and livestock market outlooks, international trade developments, a Canadian economic outlook, capital gains savvy, financial freedom, team building, food safety, more dollars from your beef and crop insurance as a management tool.

One, two and full three-day registration packages are available. Rates are for both individuals and couples. Register before January 11, 1995, and be eligible for a cellular telephone draw.

For more information or to register, call the toll-free MAP hotline at 1-800-387-6030. Brochures are also available at all Alberta Agriculture and AFSC district offices.

Contact: Dale Kuly Judy Shipley-Smith
(403)742-7904 (403)948-8505

Agri-News briefs

Cellular phone a MAP registration away

An early bird registration to the 1995 Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conference could win you a cellular telephone. People who register before January 11, 1995 are eligible for a special draw. The winner will receive a cellular telephone courtesy of the Communication Group and AGT Mobility. MAP'95 is at Red Deer's Capri Centre January 31 through February 2. The annual farm management conference features expert speakers from across North America. They'll provide a blend of theoretical and practical information about farm business management, communication, financial planning, marketing, new technologies and trade. One, two and complete three-day conference registration packages are available. For more information contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office, or call the MAP hotline toll-free at 1-800-387-6030.

4-H alumni ready to lend a helping hand

If you've ever received something so valuable you just couldn't wait to use it, you know the feeling 4-H alumni in Alberta have about their new purpose. The four alumni groups are no longer just social clubs, but recognized organizations with members trained to help out and be of service to 4-H clubs, councils and communities. Recently representatives from alumni groups met for a training weekend at the Battle Lake provincial 4-H centre. Sessions included creativity, 4-H awareness and structure, effective presentations, judging and strategic planning. One goal from the planning session was to continue to develop and strengthen a provincial 4-H alumni. The formal group will provide ongoing service and support to local communities. Regional 4-H specialists have a list of alumni members and their skills. "If you'd like to have the alumni

lend a helping hand to your club, please contact your regional 4-H specialist for more information," says Arron Madson, personal development specialist for Alberta Agriculture's home economics and 4-H branch. For more information, contact Shirley Dawley in Red Deer at (403)346-2523.

Stewardship award goes north in '94

Excellent stewardship of sensitive pasture and wooded areas on their ranch northwest of Edmonton earned Bill and Carol Lee the Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) 1994-95 Environmental Stewardship Award. Sandy soil conditions make their OOLA ranch prone to erosion. However, a rotational grazing system, moderate stocking rates and multiple/mobile water and feeding sites allow the Lees to spread grazing pressure out and ensure sustainable, healthy plant cover. Part of their management program sets aside over 300 acres of woodlands for wildlife habitat as well as maintaining tree and brush patches in fields to aid wildlife movement. The ranch is home to a wide variety of wildlife including mule and whitetail deer, moose, black bears, raptors and several species of game and song birds. In 1991 the County of Barrhead recognized the Lees with a conservation award. Bill will be featured in a new Alberta Agriculture video on range management. The Lees raise 130 cows and 50 ewes on approximately 1,800 acres near the Athabasca river. They received their award at the recent ACC annual general meeting in Calgary. Nominations are now open for the 1995-96 award. For more information contact Bill Lee at (403)584-2323 or the ACC's Ron Glaser in Calgary at (403)275-4400.

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NISA deposit extension

Producers who want to make a deposit for the 1993 Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) year have until March 31, 1995, if they submit an application by December 31, 1994. The filing deadline for the 1993 stabilization year was July 31, 1994. However, applications are still being accepted until December 31, 1994 with a five per cent monthly reduction in entitlements. NISA participants can deposit their money at a financial institution or send a cheque to the NISA administration. Deposits up to two per cent of eligible net sales can be made to receive a matching government contribution plus a three per cent interest rate bonus. To open a NISA account, contact your local financial institution or the NISA administration toll-free at 1-800-665-6472.

Olds College partners in province and abroad

Quality agricultural education got a recent financial boost at Olds College when UFA made a first instalment payment on a four-year partnership. The initial donation of \$20,000 will be supplemented with an equal amount spread over the next three years. The funding will bring the college closer to its *Land Sciences Capital Campaign* goal. Clark Fawcett, UFA grants and donations committee chair, says the most recent investment in Olds College is part of an ongoing dedication to agricultural education in Alberta. "We truly believe that Olds College is playing a large part in educating the future farmers of Alberta," says Fawcett. For more information about the ways Olds College is working with industry to provide quality education, contact Bill Souster, land sciences department dean, at (403) 556-8260. Recently, the college was also named one of three Canadian institutions to receive \$100,000 from the first Gorbachev Trust Fund in Moscow. As part of a collaborative effort with CanEd International Incorporated, Olds College will develop an education program about the free market system. The Russian project partner is the Management and Agribusiness Academy of Russia. For more information contact Red Radke, co-ordinator of international projects, at (403) 556-8394.

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ACC names new board, set direction for '95

Ben Thorlakson of Carstairs is the new chair of the Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC). Larry Helland of Lomond is the vice-chair and Karl Schneider of Mannville is the new finance chair. The selections were made at the recent ACC annual general meeting. The 1995 board of directors was also selected; one-third are first time board members. Delegates dealt with over 90 resolutions related to the cattle industry. Among their decisions were: to lobby the provincial government to ensure changes to the proposed Water Conservation and Management Act are fair to producers; to increase market development funding; to eliminate government safety net programs in the cattle industry; and, to contribute \$20,000 to help the Alberta Foundation for Animal Care deal with animal welfare issues. Minutes from the annual general meeting are available from the ACC office in Calgary at (403) 275-4400.

